

The Polka Dots

A group of four male singers much in the style of the American Hi Lo's, they were formed towards the end of the fifties decade.

In 1957 classically trained pianist Don Riddell was working in a group at London's Cafe de Paris night spot where Jimmy Walker was playing tenor-sax. In conversation they discovered a mutual interest in singing and decided to form a vocal group with Tony Mansell and Joe Temperley making up the quartet.

All were well established in the music profession, Riddell, whose classical upbringing had been overtaken by jazz, previously played in the bands of Vic Lewis and Eric Delaney, Jimmy Walker had worked with Ambrose and Jack Parnell, Temperley played baritone-sax in Humphrey Lyttleton's band and Tony Mansell was an ex-trumpet player vocalist with Johnny Dankworth.

Dressed in polka dot ties, pocket handkerchiefs and shirts, the group made their debut on Geraldo's ITV show 'Gerry's Inn' on Monday 13th January 1958 and from March began a 13 week BBC radio series 'Evening Star'. Other exposure included appearances with Ted Heath's band and broadcasts on the 'Show Band Show'. They were also the regular singing group on Humphrey Lyttleton's Radio Luxembourg Sunday evening series 'Here's Humph'.

In May the Polka Dots made the first of several Pye recordings, 'There'll never be another you' coupled with 'Don't make small talk baby', then they backed country singer Johnny Duncan on one of his Columbia singles and made an E.P. 'Singin' and Swingin'' (SEG7894) for the same label. Their Philips recording of 'Sucu sucu' was used as the theme tune for the 1961 ITV series 'Top Secret', that starred William Franklyn as an Argentina based detective.

When the pressure of Joe Temperley's other commitments led him to leave in June, an indication of how popular the group had become in such a short time, was the willingness of Fred Datchler to leave the well established and very successful Stargazers and take his place. During October they were appearing at The Astor Club.

In December the Polka Dots were voted by readers of the Melody Maker, Britain's top vocal group, taking 42% of the votes with the Mudlarks coming second. Consistent poll winners, in the 1960 Melody Maker 'British jazz' poll they were the outright winner taking 85% of the votes with no second or third being listed, a position they retained well into the sixties.

While popular on television programmes such as 'Dig This', 'The Jack Jackson Show' and 'The Melody Dances', a growing source of income was the lucrative TV jingle business. Some late fifties products they endorsed in song were Bri-Nylon, Dairy Box, Quality Street, Player's Navy Cut and Kit Kat with Alma Cogan.

They appeared in and sang the title song of the 1960 Anthony Newley film 'Jazzboat', and the same year became featured vocal group on the long running radio series 'Take It From Here'. Having restricted their public appearances to mainly London's clubland, in 1960 they branched out spending the summer at Great Yarmouth's Windmill Theatre, in the 'Tommy Trinder Show'.

Later in the year they were regulars on Joan Regan's BBC TV series 'Be My Guest', an invitation that was accepted again in 1961.

By early 1961 founder member Don Riddell had moved on, replaced by Dennis Price and it was this line up that appeared with Diana Dors on ATV's 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium' on 16th April. During Jo Stafford's 1961 UK tour, she chose the Polka Dots as her vocal support and they also featured on her 13 week ATV series.

By the mid-sixties The Polka Dots, like most other British vocal groups from the fifties, had been virtually swept away by the incoming tide of rock and roll flotsam. At least one member, Tony Mansell, continued to be popular over the following decades, leading his own vocal groups, and was still performing in the 1990's.

The Polka Dots Recordings

PYE		
N 15144 May	58	'There'll never be another you / Don't make small talk baby'
N 15153 Jly	58	(with <i>Teddy Johnson</i>) 'Merci beaucoup / A great big piece of chalk'
N 15194 Mar	59	'Hey liley, liley lo / Go chase a moonbeam'
N 15211 Jly	59	(with <i>Laurie Johnson orch</i>) 'Girls in my arms / You've done something to my heart'
		COLUMBIA
DB 4179 Aug	58	(with <i>Johnny Duncan</i>) 'Geisha girl / My lucky love'
		PHILIPS
BF 1188 Oct	61	'Sucu sucu / Swingin' thru the park'
BF 1228 Mar	62	'When we say hello / April showers'
BF 1247	62	'The Costa Brava / Run run Senorita'

Duffy POWER

Duffy, whose real name was Ray Howard, was another prodigy of star-maker Larry Parnes, who spotted him at a Shepherds Bush dance contest and signed him because he was a good mover.

With a bit of coaching and billed as "a sensational new teenage singer" (weren't they all?) Duffy made his first record, in May 1959, a cover of Bobby Darin's number one hit 'Dream lover'. But it was his second disc, 'Kissin' time', in September, that owed much to an excellent backing by Ken Jones and his orchestra featuring an un-named sax player, that made people notice him.

His radio debut was on 'Saturday Club' on 17th October and so well was he received he was back on again in November. Duffy returned to the show on several occasions, while his public appearances were confined mainly to Parnes' rock-package shows. He was on the support bill of Freddy Cannon's 1960 UK tour. One of the more successful of Larry Parnes later discoveries, Duffy enjoyed several years of popularity.

Duffy Power Recordings

FONTANA

H 194 May 59 'Dream lover / That's my little Suzie'
H 214 Sep 59 'Kissin' time / Ain't she sweet' (*acc by*)

Ken

Jones orch)

H 230 Nov 59 'Starry eyed / Prettier than you'
H 279 Nov 60 'Whole lotta shakin' goin' on / If I can dream'
H 302 Mar 61 'When we're walking close / I've got nobody'
H 344 Oct 61 'No other love / What now'

PARLOPHONE

R 4992 Feb 63 'It ain't necessarily so / If I get lucky someday'
R 5024 63 (*with the Graham Bond Quartet*) 'I saw her

standing there /

Farewell baby'

R 5059 63 'Hey girl / Woman made trouble'
R 5111 64 'Tired, broke and busted / Parchment farm'
R 5169 64 'Where am I / I don't care'
R 5631 Oct 67 'Davy O'Brien / July tree'

C,B,S.

5176 70 'Hummingbird / Hell hound'
(also on Epic

EPC 7139)
GSF

GSZ 8 73 'Liberation / Song about Jesus'

Lou PREAGER

Lou, born in Bow, East London on 12th January 1906, trained as a classical pianist and gave his first public performance at the age of ten. On leaving school he went to work as a trainee accountant, while playing evenings in a cinema orchestra, but soon gave up the chance of a secure career in favour of show-business, spending the next six years touring Europe in revue as pianist, comic and general stage hand. He worked for bandleader Bert Firman in Britain and France, often fronting the band in Bert's absence.

Lou then settled down to playing piano in London clubs, including Eugene Pini's Tango Orchestra at the Monseigneur Restaurant, from where he made his first broadcast. Lou formed his first band at Ciro's Club in 1933 and after a long spell at Romano's Restaurant in The Strand took it on the road in 1937, spending the next two years touring again. In 1935, during his residency at Romano's, Lou was offered the position of MD with the Australian Broadcasting Co. but declined and the post was taken by Howard Jacobs.

At the outbreak of war Lou was fronting a band at Caproni's Restaurant in Bognor. Deciding to join the army, he was first persuaded to take his outfit on a troop concert tour of France. He later served with the Intelligence Corps but while training in Scotland sustained a serious injury to his right elbow in a motoring accident and was invalided out in 1942.

Forming another band he began his long association with the Hammersmith Palais de Danse. Vocalists with him then were Paul Rich and Edna Kaye. Paul stayed with the band through to the mid-fifties, but the years saw

several changes of female singer including Lynne Shaw, Eileen Orchard, Hazel Day, Tina Vaughan and, on record at least, the very versatile Rita Williams.

Regularly on air with 'Saturday Night at the Palais', in 1945 he introduced his first "write a song for a thousand pounds" radio competition. From over seventy thousand entries, over half of them waltzes, the winner, 'Cruising down the river', was the composition of two spinster ladies, Nellie Tollerton and Eily Beadell. Film star Margaret Lockwood presented them with the £1,000 winners cheque. Surprisingly none of the music publishers wanted to take it on and Lou had to agree to cover any losses before Cinephonic Music would print any copies! Needless to say it became a big hit. Lou, of course, was one of the first to put the tune onto disc, with Paul Rich taking the vocal.

Lou had first appeared on record with his Romano's Orchestra early in 1935, on the Panachord label, with vocals from Pat Hyde and Gerry Fitzgerald. Over the following 18 months he put just over thirty tunes on disc, but didn't record again until 1944. Then, for about ten years Lou, his orchestra and singers, enjoyed a busy schedule recording many of the popular hits of the day, before it all dried up again. He did some recording in the late fifties for the budget priced Gala Records and I believe he made a couple of LP's with a session orchestra in the early seventies. During the forties Lou's rhythm section included pianist Billy Penrose, who recorded several sides as a boogie-woogie stylist on Parlophone's Rhythm Style Series, supported by other members of the Preager rhythm section. Lou, who led an excellent sweet but swinging band, perfected by the use of seven saxophones and a smaller than usual brass section, played at the Hammersmith Palais, then reckoned to be the largest ballroom in Europe, six nights a week (and most afternoons as well) for something like seventeen years. That was until December 1959 when the Palais was sold to the Mecca Organisation and the Joe Loss Band took over. During his time there, Lou broadcast regularly from the Palais and the BBC celebrated his 21 years of broadcasting with a live birthday party from the ballroom on Tuesday 7th September 1954. Lou presented radio's 'Housewives Choice' the same week. Over the years he introduced a number of radio disc shows like 'Record Serenade', 'Platter Playtime' and 'Listen With Lou'.

In 1956 he produced his own ITV series 'Palais Party', which featured a cash prize quiz and a find-a-singer contest, the winner getting a Columbia record test. The 'Find a Singer' section was later expanded into an annual series with Gala Records offering the record test. During the late fifties he also presented ITV's 'Princess for a Day' on which a randomly chosen young lady had her dreams come true, just for a day.

Just before he left Hammersmith Palais Lou, who said he had been experimenting for years to find a new sound, introduced a softer style effected by the use of mink lined mutes. The idea was suggested by his second wife Rose, who had been his secretary for many years before they married in October 1958. Lou and his first wife Constance divorced at the end of the war.

After leaving Hammersmith Palais Lou and his band moved straight uptown to the Lyceum in The Strand, but within a year ill health forced him to quit. He went into the Royal Masonic Hospital for an internal operation while his current boy singer Jimmy Mayers fronted the band.

Unfortunately Lou was never fit enough to lead a full time band again and poor health dogged him the rest of his life. He moved out of his Central London flat and bought a house in Slough. He also bought the local Carlton Ballroom where he said he could put into practice all the good ideals he'd had during his years as a bandleader. And he still continued to present AR-TV's 'Find A Singer' shows from ballrooms all over the country.

Following a heart attack in 1967 he sold the ballroom and put all of his energy into perfecting his golf swing. Except for a visit to President Records' studios in 1973 it was the end of Lou's musical ambitions. In 1976 he went to live in Majorca and died there on 14th November 1978.

A deeply serious man Lou held a Doctor of Psychology and Doctor of Metaphysics from an American college. He was a practising psychologist and was thought by many to have the power of spirit healing. He was also a very astute businessman. His brother Alf was a theatrical agent with offices in Charing Cross Road.

Lou Preager Orchestra Recordings from 1944

vocals where known are PR = Paul Rich - EK = Edna Kaye

LS = Lynne Shaw - RW = Rita Williams - RC = Rita Carr
EO = Eileen Orchard - RH = Rusty Hurren - TS = The Sunnysiders
PC = Pearl Carr - SS = The Sun Spots - JM = Jimmy Mayers

REGAL ZONOPHONE

MR 3737 44 'The quack quack song (v. PR & EK) /
It's love, love,
love (v. EK)
MR 3744 44 'Choc'late soldier from the U.S.A
(v. EK) /
I've got a heart filled with love
(v. PR & EK)
MR 3747 44 'You're in love (v. PR) / Boogie
bounce'
MR 3749 45 'No one else will do (v. PR) /
The trolley
song (v. EK)
MR 3751 45 'Who said dreams don't come
true? (v. PR) /
My dreams are getting better all
the time (v. EK)
MR 3753 45 'Ten o'clock jive / Morning train'

COLUMBIA

FB 3115 Jun 45 'Waiting in sweetheart valley (v. PR) /
The last waltz of the
evening (v. LS)
FB 3123 Jly 45 'In a little while (v. LS) /
The cokey
cokey (v. PR)
FB 3124 Jly 45 'I'm beginning to see the light /
Coming home
(both v. PR)
FB 3129 Aug 45 'Bring on the drums / Doggin' around'
FB 3137 Sep 45 'Saturday night (is the loneliest night
of the

week) (v. LS) /

Sophisticated lady'
FB 3144 Oct 45 'Don't take your love from me /
Remember me

(both v. RW)
FB 3156 Nov 45 'I'll always be with you (v. PR) /
My Yiddishe

Momme (v. RC)
FB 3157 Nov 45 'I'd rather be me (v. PR) / Too bad (v. RC)
FB 3167 Dec 45 'I hope to die (if I told a lie) /
Lonely footsteps

(both v. PR)
FB 3168 Dec 45 'Let's keep it that way / I'll close my
eyes

(both v. PR)
FB 3178 Jan 46 'Two can dream as cheaply as one /
Carolina

(both v. PR)
FB 3180 Jan 46 'Cruising down the river (v. PR) / Did
you ever
get that feeling in the

moonlight (v. RW)
FB 3182 Feb 46 'I'm so all alone /
The trees in Grosvenor Square

(both v. RW)
FB 3183 Feb 46 'My heart is dancing with you /
Nancy

(both v. PR)
FB 3192 Mar 46 'Though you're in love with somebody
else /
Just a blue serge suit

(both v. RW)
FB 3199 Apr 46 'Ashby-de-la-Zouch (Castle Abbey) (v. PR) /
Good good good (v.

PR & RW)
FB 3200 Apr 46 'Let bygones be bygones (v. RW) /
I'll buy that

dream (v. PR)
FB 3207 May 46 'Who could love you like me (v. RW) /
I don't

know (v. PR)
FB 3216 Jun 46 'I'd like to get you alone (v. PR) /
Sweet dreams to

you (v. RW)
FB 3228 Jly 46 'First floor jump / Third floor jump'
FB 3229 Aug 46 'Don't be a baby, baby (v. PR) /
There's no one but

you (v. RW)
FB 3238 Sep 46 'The wonder of you (v. PR) /
Do you love

me (v. RC)
FB 3250 Oct 46 'Some day you'll want me to want you
(v. PR) /

Pretending (v. RW)
FB 3260 Nov 46 'Too many irons in the fire (v. PR) /
Down in the

valley (v. RW)
FB 3264 Dec 46 'Boomps-a-daisy (v. PR) /
The panda

walk (v. RW)
FB 3273 Jan 47 'The old lamplighter (v. PR) /
It's all over

now (v. RW)
FB 3282 Feb 47 'Three beautiful words of love (v. PR) /
The world belongs to you little

man (v. RW)
FB 3288 Mar 47 'I keep forgetting to remember (v. PR) /
Each little

hour (v. RW)
FB 3293 Apr 47 'How lucky you are (v. RW) /

		Hi-jig-a-	tomorrows (v. EO)
jig (v. PR)			FB 3436 Nov 48 'When the organ played Ave Maria (v. EO)
FB 3297 May 47	'May I call you sweetheart (v. PR) /		/ I want to learn to
	When China boy meets China		
girl (v. RW)			dance (v. RH)
FB 3303 Jun 47	'The little old mill (v. PR) /		FB 3444 Dec 48 'There's nothing to do in Sleepyville /
	Goodnight (you little rascal		You belong to someone else
you) (v. RW)			(both v. PR)
FB 3304 Jun 47	'You went away and left me / Oh Oh		FB 3451 Jan 49 'Underneath the Linden tree (v. EO) /
Maria			In my
(both v. PR)			dreams (v. PR)
FB 3317 Jly 47	'Just before I fall asleep (v. chorus) /		FB 3452 Jan 49 'I'd love to live in Loveland (with a girl
	I'm gonna lassoo a		like
dream (v. PR)			you) (v. PR) / Ah, but it
FB 3323 Aug 47	'The first day of summer (v. EO) /		happens (v. RH)
			FB 3460 Feb 49 'Brush those tears from your eyes (v. RH) /
			Bouquet of
Heartaches (v. PR)			roses (v. PR)
FB 3327 Aug 47	'On the sunny side of the street /		FB 3461 Feb 49 'My bonnie prince (v. RW) (composed
	Who's		to
sorry now'			celebrate birth of Prince
FB 3330 Sep 47	'I get up ev'ry morning (v. PR) /		Charles) /
	It's		
dreamtime (v. EO)			Until (v. PR)
FB 3331 Sep 47	'Apple blossom wedding (v. PR) /		FB 3470 Mar 49 'I'd give the world (v. PR) / Sulva Bay
	It's never too late to		(v. RW)
mend (v. EO)			FB 3472 Apl 49 'Your still the only girl in the world /
FB 3339 Oct 47	'Bow bells (v. PR) /		The
	Huggin' and		dreamer (v. RH)
chalkin' (v. RH)			FB 3486 May 49 'Hang on the bell, Nellie (v. RH & PC)
FB 3340 Oct 47	'Temptation (v. PR) / Pastel saxe		/
blue'			On the
FB 3352 Nov 47	'My first love, my last love for always		5.45 (v. RH)
(v. PR)	/ Christmas		FB 3487 May 49 'Lillette (v. PR) / Manana (v. PC)
dreaming (v. EO)			FB 3496 Jun 49 'You're gonna miss my kisses (v. RH) /
FB 3355 Dec 47	'A garden in the rain (v. PR) /		Ain't it
	Peg o' my		nice? (v. PR)
heart (v. TS)			FB 3506 Jly 49 'The wedding of Lilli Marlene (v. PR) /
FB 3367 Jan 48	'Bella bella Marie (v. PR) / Au revoir		Carnival time (v.
(v. EO)			PR & trio)
FB 3368 Jan 48	'The shoemaker's serenade (v. EO) /		FB 3510 Aug 49 'The merry-go-round waltz / Devon
	And		
Mimi (v. PR)			(both v. PR)
FB 3373 Feb 48	'When the red, red robin (comes bob-		FB 3517 Sep 49 'Love song of Renaldo (v. PR & SS) /
bobbin'			My golden
smoke!	along) (v. TS) / Smoke! smoke!		baby (v. PR)
(v. RH)			FB 3524 Oct 49 'Song of Capri (v. PR) / The wedding
FB 3383 Mar 48	'How soon (will I be seeing you)		samba'
(v. PR) /	Whisper that you love		FB 3525 Oct 49 'Too-whit! too-whoo! (v. RH & SS) /
			Far far
me (v. EO)			away (v. SS)
FB 3386 Mar 48	'Music for Dancing : Say what you		DX 1614 Nov 49 (12 inch Paul Jones medley) 'The lady
mean /			is a
my hands'	Time on		tramp / Time on my hands / How
FB 3395 May 48	'Music for Dancing : Together /		Killarney / The wedding samba /
	The		Walk / Booms-a-daisy / Poor little
mockin' bird'			/ Jolly good
FB 3403 Jun 48	'Oh, my achin' heart (v. PR) /		company'
	I'm a-comin' a-		(next two discs in strict dance tempo)
courtin' (v. TS)			FB 3534 Dec 49 'The Harry Lime theme / A million
FB 3408 Jly 48	'After all (v. PR) / Don't call it		miles away'
love (v. EO)			FB 3535 Dec 49 'We'll always be together /
FB 3413 Aug 48	'Dance, ballerina, dance / Rambling		Ev'rywhere'
rose			FB 3542 Feb 50 'Mamma knows best (v. SS) /
(both v. PR)			Long, long
FB 3422 Sep 48	'The woody woodpecker song (v. EO) /		ago (v. PR)
	Toolie oolie		FB 3554 Apl 50 'The old master painter (v. RH) /
doolie (v. PR)			The French can-can
FB 3426 Oct 48	'Ballin' the jack (v. PR & TS) /		polka (v. SS)
	Far away		FB 3565 Jly 50 'The night the floor fell in /
island (v. PR)			Two on a tandem
FB 3427 Oct 48	'There ought to be a society (v. RH) /		(both v. PR)
	I'd give a million		DX 1708 Dec 50 (12 inch Paul Jones medley) 'Bibbidi-
			bobbidi
			-boo / Me and my imagination /

Whisper while you waltz / Mambo
jambo / Charleston / Mona Lisa /
Sometime / Tzena
tzena tzena'
DB 2931 Oct 51 (*Lou Preager Charm of the Waltz orch*)
'Longing for you (v. PR) / Love's
roundabout'
POLYGON
P 1095 Jan 54 'The door senor (v. RH) / Madonna'
P 1106 Mar 54 'I see the moon / Pianna rag
(*both v. The Ragpickers*)
P 1108 Mar 54 'I'll follow you (v. PR) / Egon tango'
H.M.V.
B 10746 Sep 54 (*with Larry Hayward*) 'Funny, but I didn't cry / I'll
follow you'
COLUMBIA
DB 4115 Apl 58 'Marchin' drummer blues / Fedora'
GALA (*Lou Preager's Mink Tone Music*)
(*these are extended play medleys*)
45XP1043 59 'Quickstep / Foxtrot'
45XP1052 59 'Waltz / Tango'
45XP1059 59 'Samba / Cha Cha'

Mike PRESTON

Mike, born Jack Davis at Clapton, north London in 1938, had been a champion boxer in the Irish Guards losing only eight fights in 78 bouts. A keen footballer too, he played for Hackney in the English Schools Shield. Not just an all round sportsman, as a lad he also sang soprano in his local church choir.

Back in civvy street 23 year old Mike was working as a television cartoon camera-man, and was still singing (but now in a lower register). Having made several unsuccessful attempts to interest record companies, his voice eventually came to the notice of record producer Dennis Preston who recommended him to Decca Records. And so it was that Decca issued his recording of the Jerry Lordan song 'A house, a car and a wedding ring' in August 1958. Hardly noticed in this country, it nevertheless took off in the States where it was out on the London label. America's 'Variety' magazine named it as one of their "best bets" and it was soon ringing up sales of 25,000 a day. Mike flew out in November for TV and radio appearances (he did about fifty in two weeks), but he didn't give up his day job.

Decca followed up with several more singles, but it wasn't until his October 1959 recording of 'Mr. Blue' (produced by the legendary Joe Meek for Record Supervision Studios) that Mike Preston became a well known name in Britain. Reaching No.12 on the hit parade it was the first of Mike's four chart successes. The others were 'I'd do anything', 'Togetherness' and 'Marry me'. Unfortunately 'Mr. Blue' didn't repeat its success for Mike across the Atlantic, where The Fleetwoods took the song to number one.

With the success of 'Mr. Blue' Mike, who was living with his wife of two years Josie and young daughter Carla in East London, gave up his job behind the camera as he was now spending a lot of time in front of them. He was on all the obligatory shows, 'Six Five Special', 'Cool for Cats', 'Saturday Club' and even 'Workers Playtime'. He toured in rock package shows and enjoyed several years of popularity.

During the sixties Mike and family emigrated to Australia, initially working as a night club singer and television host, before taking up acting. During 1972-73 he played the role of detective Bob Delaney in a police drama series 'Homicide' and later appeared in a soap opera named 'Bellbird' that ran from 1974 to 1976, plus a short lived prison series 'Punishment' in 1981. He also made guest appearances on other television series including 'The 'A' Team'. Mike appeared in several Australian films, the first being 'Surabaya Conspiracy' in 1969, while others included the 1981 hit 'Mad Max 2'.

Mike Preston Recordings

DECCA

F 11053 Aug 58 'A house, a car and a wedding ring / My lucky love' (*acc by Harry Robinson orch*)
F 11087 Nov 58 'Whispering grass / Why, why, why' (*acc by Harry Robinson orch*)

F 11120 Mar 59 'Dirty old town / In Surabaya' (*acc by Johnny Douglas orch*)

F 11167 Oct 59 'Mr. Blue / Just ask your heart' (*acc by Harry Robinson orch*)

F 11222 Mar 60 'A girl like you / Too old' (*acc by Ian Fraser orch*)

F 11255 Jly 60 'I'd do anything / Where is love'
F 11287 Oct 60 'Ferewell my love / Togetherness'
F 11335 Mar 61 'Marry me / Girl without a heart' (*acc by Harry Robinson orch*)

F 11366 Jun 61 'It's all happening / Just as I am'
F 11385 Sep 61 'As if I didn't know / Game of chance'
F 11440 Mar 62 'I've got all the time in the world /

Innocent eyes'
F 11461 May 62 'My first love affair / Suspicion'
F 11498 Aug 62 'It's a sin to tell a lie / Careless love'
F 11613 Mar 63 'From the very first rose / Punish her'
F 11754 Oct 63 'Cry baby / Write to me'
F 11810 Jan 64 'No strings / Nobody told me'
F 12092 Mar 65 'Till then my love / I know'

EMERALD

MD 1028 64 'Our love will go on / Forgive me'

Red PRICE

A big man who made a big noise on stage, behind the scenes Red was a quiet, modest individual with a fondness for cool jazz. Remembered for his rasping tenor-sax in Lord Rockingham's XI on ITV's 'Oh Boy', his musical upbringing had been much more conventional.

A member of Hal Graham's Band at Liverpool in the early fifties, he progressed through the ranks of The Squadronaires, Jack Parnell and Ted Heath, leaving the latter to build himself into a solo personality in the growing rock and roll industry of the late fifties.

Following up on his featured role in 'Oh Boy', he was then a soloist in Bill Shepherd's Firing Squad, assembled for 'Boy Meets Girl' that replaced 'Oh Boy' in September 1959. In April 1960 along came 'Wham' produced by Jack Good and Red was there too, a member of the 18 piece Fat Noise led by Syd Dale. Red was also leading his own Quintet backing singers on radio's 'Saturday Club'. He took this Combo on the road supporting stars like Adam Faith, Matt Monro and Jes Conrad and toured extensively with Helen Shapiro.

Red waxed a number of singles, the Decca sides possibly while he was still with Ted Heath.

Red Price Recordings	
DECCA	
F 10822 Dec 56	(with his Rocking Rhythm) 'Rocky Mountain
the north'	gal / Rock o'
PYE	
N 15169 Nov 58	'Weekend / The sneeze' (acc by Bill Shepherd orch)
N 15262 May 60	'Wow / My baby's door'
PARLOPHONE	
R 4789 61	'Danger man / Blackjack'

Rikki PRICE

Rikki suddenly bounced into the musical spotlight, in November 1958, when his cover of the Kingston Trio hit 'Tom Dooley' received Royal approval. Newspaper reports claimed Princess Margaret had asked Fontana for a copy. No doubt Fontana's recording manager Jack Baverstock (still called A & R men then) was pleased as sales took off. Originally this had been destined as the 'B' side, with the oldie 'It looks like rain in Cherry Blossom Lane' intended as the lead tune.

At the time dark haired 23 year old Rikki was still working in a builder's yard in Newcastle-on-Tyne. He did have a wife and three year old daughter to support. But with the success of this first disc he soon gave up the day job and began touring in what remained of variety theatres.

A couple more Fontana records followed, pleasant but not outstanding, and that was about it. Club cabaret work kept him going for a while.

Rikki Price Recordings	
FONTANA	
H 162 Nov 58	'Tom Dooley / Cherry Blossom Lane'
H 171 Jan 59	'Honey honey / The very thought of you'
H 217 Oct 59	'Mr. Blue / Man on my trail'
H 371 Feb 62	'You're for real / When you pass by'

Dickie PRIDE

Another late fifties entrant to the Larry Parnes stable of rock singers, Dickie had a minor hit with the gentle ballad 'Primrose Lane'.

A vocalist of some merit, Richard Kneller (his real name) as a boy sang in the school choir and was good enough to be selected to study at the Royal College of Church Music. He consequently sang at Addington Palace and Canterbury Cathedral.

In 1958 Richard was just 17 when pianist Russ Conway spotted him singing in a pub in Tooting Broadway and recommended him to Parnes. His debut appearance with the firm was a charity concert at the Gaumont State, Kilburn, where he was introduced by Vince Eager as just Dickie, and he was a sensation.

In no time he had earned the title "Sheik of Shake" because of his gyrations on stage, that were enhanced by his long 'matchstick' legs and shoes that looked like size 14. TV producer Jack Good once remarked "it's impossible to knock him over because most of his weight is below his ankles".

Dickie toured with Parnes other singers and appeared in his 1960 Blackpool summer season production 'Idols on Parade'. He was regularly heard and seen on radio and television and Columbia Records as well as issuing his singles output, later gave him the honour of his own album 'Pride Without Prejudice' with an Eric Jupp backing.

Thought by many to be the best of Parnes rock circus, Dickie never made top billing. This was rumoured to be because of his unpredictable temperament and self opinionated ways. Whatever the reason, he had already set himself on a path of self destruction with an increasing drug habit. Eventually dropped by Parnes, he is reported to have taken a job delivering coal, although I'm surprised he had the strength to lift a shovel full, never mind a sack full.

Dickie never reversed his fall from grace, and so it was that in May 1969 a Croydon inquest returned a verdict that 27 year old Dickie Pride had died as a result of drug addiction.

Dickie has been called the finest 'unknown' of British rockers. He was a natural entertainer and on a good day was full of fun and energy on and off stage. A wasted talent, he could have been very big indeed.

Dickie Pride Recordings	
COLUMBIA	
DB 4283 Apl 59	'Slippin' 'n' slidin' / Don't make me love you'
DB 4296 Apl 59	'Midnight oil / Fabulous cure'
DB 4340 Sep 59	'Primrose Lane / Frantic'
DB 4403 Jan 60	'Betty Betty / No John'
DB 4451 Apl 60	'You're singing our love song to somebody else
	/ Bye bye blackbird'

Danny PURCHES

A true Romany living in a Gypsy camp Daniel Purcessi was 'discovered' while busking in London's streets. Who it was discovered him depends on which version you read. One says it was music publisher Ken Pitt, another says it

was TV producer Henry Caldwell (who gave him a spot on a 'Shop Window' show), while I like to believe it was Lita Roza and her sister Alma Warren (who recommended him to her boss Stanley Black). Whatever, it's pretty certain a lot of people saw him, accompanied by his nephew Tony on accordion, singing for coppers (not the "evening all" kind) on the streets of London Town.

Born in a Gypsy caravan in Surrey on 19th January 1933, his father was a Spanish-Italian who had been a circus clown and his mother an Irish Romany. He had twelve brothers and four sisters. Just before the war the family had moved into a house in Portsmouth and Danny was evacuated to Basingstoke and then Wales. After the war they lived in Watchet, a small port on Somerset's coast, where he helped his father who worked as a window cleaner and chimney sweep.

In 1950 Danny began his National Service in the R.A.F. where, taking part in camp concerts he discovered his voice. After leaving the service he found work singing in clubs before coming to London in 1953, becoming a West End busker.

After being 'discovered' he appeared on television in 'Shop Window' on Monday 16th November 1953. He did some one-night-stands with Stanley Black's Orchestra and had a week in variety at the East Ham Granada from Monday 8th March 1954. On stage, simply dressed in white open necked shirt and black trousers, with his romantic 'Latin lover' looks and flexing muscles, he made a striking appearance.

Danny's unpredictability and seemingly no fixed abode (he was still living the Romany life) made his progress erratic to say the least. He 'disappeared' for days at a time, usually just after he'd been paid, only returning when the cash ran out.

By early 1955 Danny was regularly appearing with Eric Delaney's Band. In March he had a three minute spot on TV's 'In Town Tonight' and overnight was suddenly showered with offers. He signed, what was reported to be a £10,000 contract, to tour in variety.

Columbia Records gave him a test and, liking his sensitive but powerful husky voice, issued his first disc, a version of Johnny Brandon's 'Tomorrow' coupled with 'A rusty old halo', in May 1955. On the day of recording Ray Martin with an orchestra of musicians booked for the session were ready but Danny didn't turn up, so they laid down the backing track and Danny added his vocal a couple of days later.

His variety tour took him all round Britain, with a week at London's Finsbury Empire in August, and lasted through to mid-1956. He made several TV and radio appearances and Columbia followed up on their initial release, although none of his recordings made any great impact.

In September he took over Anthony Newley's role in a touring version of the revue 'Cranks', that also starred Annie Ross, Hugh Bryant and Gilbert Vernon. In the show Danny showed he could also play comedy to good effect. This lasted until November when the show transferred to Broadway without him.

Danny returned to the variety stage but announced he intended to concentrate on his acting and revue roles. He played a straight part

in the ITV play 'The Last Mile' in March 1957 and was a popular judge on a heat of the Miss Great Britain contest at the Lyceum Ballroom in February.

During 1958 he was still treading the variety stage, on a bill that included the singing Mackell Twins. Danny had married one half of the act, Pat Mackell, in a double wedding with her sister at St. Mary's, Wimbledon on the previous 5th October. He played his first summer season, at Blackpool South Pier in the Norman Evans Show, with Sheila Buxton and the Morton Frazer Gang. He said he was trying to shake off his Gypsy image as it didn't fit his new beat style. Although the same year a Romany flavour was added to the story line when he made his first appearance in pantomime, as principle boy in 'Puss In Boots' at Edinburgh's Palladium Theatre.

The Romany influence was still there when he made his first London appearance in some time at The Metropolitan in June 1959. Dressed in the white shirt and black trousers, he also wore a red sash and sang in a Gypsy caravan setting.

Danny had a few more years of moderate success, but as work slowed down his apparent spendthrift ways, usually treating his extensive family, reduced him to taking work from any source and the final report I have, is of him singing in strip clubs.

Danny Purches Recordings
COLUMBIA

DB 3604 May 55 'A rusty old halo / Tomorrow'
DB 3626 Jun 55 'Mama / Just one more time' (*acc by Norrie*)

Paramor orch
DB 3673 Nov 55 'There's always a first time / Golden earrings'

DB 3748 Apl 56 'Guilty kisses / We all need love'
DB 3860 Dec 56 'You can't run away from it / You don't

know me'
DB 4129 Mar 58 'The shrine on the second floor / He' (*acc by Tony*)

Oshborne orch)

Oscar RABIN

Oscar Rabin was a name well known to London dancers throughout the fifties, his band being resident at the prestigious Lyceum Ballroom in the Strand for most of that decade. And via its long string of Parlophone recordings and broadcasts, this was a band that was immensely popular right across the country.

Born Oscar Rabinowitz in Riga, Russia on 16th April 1899, he was the son of a Russian cobbler who came to England when Oscar was just four years old and settled in London's East End. Having a natural aptitude for music he learnt violin and won a scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music.

When Oscar left school he began playing in theatre and hotel orchestras, and after service in the first World War formed his own band playing at Lyons' restaurants. Moving on to dance hall bookings he met and formed a partnership with banjo playing Harry Davis who became the front man for the eight piece Oscar Rabin Romany Band, while Oscar himself preferred to hide behind his large baritone saxophone. This was a

partnership that lasted over twenty years.

A season at Southend's Palace Hotel in 1926, was followed by a long residency at Wimbledon Palais. In 1930 the Romany band replaced Billy Cotton at the Astoria Danse Salon in London's Charing Cross Road remaining there five years. In 1933 they made their first recordings on the Sterno label.

At the outbreak of World War Two, following another spell at Wimbledon, the band were now resident at Hammersmith Palais, but war regulations closed all entertainment places for fear of heavy casualties in a bomb attack, and the band broke up. It's worth noting here that just before the war Oscar and his band made a little piece of television history, when they appeared live from Hammersmith Palais on Saturday 22nd October 1938, the first ever broadcast on TV from a dance hall. Vocalist with them was Eve Becke.

After about a month many places of entertainment were allowed to re-open, the government deciding it was more important to keep up public morale. Oscar and Harry formed a new band, most of the original members had either joined other outfits or gone into the services and, dropping the Romany name, were soon back in residence at Hammersmith. They were now known as the Oscar Rabin Band with Harry Davis.

By now Oscar's son Bernard, who although a trained violinist had chosen the business side of show business, was managing the band. Oscar and Harry were still there, of course, along with vocalists Beryl Davis, Gary Gowan and Diane (who was later to become Mrs. Bernard Rabin). It was Bernard who encouraged his father to turn what was an ordinary ten piece palais dance band into a big band of some merit. Oscar, a much more cautious man, was finally persuaded to take the band on the road by a number of experimental Sunday concerts that each earned more than the band normally made in a week at the Palais.

After a trial week at Bristol Hippodrome, a nationwide tour kicked off at Glasgow Empire in September 1940, playing a mix of variety theatres and dance hall venues. With regular broadcasts, the Oscar Rabin Band became well known during the 1940's and well respected by the dancing and listening public. After vocalist Gary Gowan was called up into the forces his place was taken by Bob Dale who when suffering the same fate was succeeded by Cyril Shane and then Alan Dean. Beryl Davis later left, to be replaced by Terry Devon, Marion Davis, Marjorie Daw and others.

By the end of the war the Rabin Booking Agency headed by Bernard was a force to be reckoned with and now included Oscar's other sons Ivor and David (the latter an adopted Polish refugee). Already involved in handling other bands, the family expanded even further by buying the Wimbledon Palais and installing Ken Mackintosh and Teddy Foster as its resident bandleaders in September 1950.

In 1951 Oscar took up residency once again at one of London's most prestigious ballrooms, the Lyceum in the Strand. The same year Harry Davis ended his long association when he went to live permanently with his daughter Beryl in

America. For his replacement as leader Oscar looked no further than another member of the band, handsome young arranger and singing clarinet player David Ede. Booked into the Lyceum by Mecca for a three month season, they were so popular they stayed seven years, with Oscar becoming a director of Mecca as reward.

During his years at the Lyceum Oscar employed many vocalists. With him when he moved there were Dennis Hale, Marjorie Daw and Marion Davis. Others to feature through the years were Patti Forbes, Franklyn Boyd, Marion Williams, Clyde Ray, Stephanie Wise, Mel Gaynor, Johnny Worth, Jan Fraser and Lorie Mann.

The Rabin band were on some of the very first of television's 'Come Dancing' programmes from the early 1950's and were also the band that launched BBC radio's popular fifties music show 'Go Man Go'.

Oscar's sudden death from a heart attack in June 1958 at the age of only 59 was a blow that could have spelt the end of the band. But under Bernard's management, with David Ede still at the helm, the Oscar Rabin band continued to perform. One outcome of Oscar's death was that the Mecca contract expired and so David and the boys went on the road, returning each weekend to Wimbledon Palais, still owned by the Rabin Organization.

Looking for a new 'show-case' for the band, David Ede convinced BBC dance band chief Jim Davidson that he could produce a beat show to challenge anything currently available, and was given a three month chance with 'Go Man Go' on the Light Programme from December 1958. This regular Monday lunch time show aimed at teenagers, with its balance of pop, rock, vocals and trad jazz, became an instant hit and continued for over five years. The musical mix, introduced by David Ede, was provided solely by the band with its current singers Lorie Mann, Ray Pilgrim and Colin Day.

In 1965, with the agreement of Bernard Rabin, the outfit changed its name to 'David Ede and his band' and were booked into a summer season at Mecca's new Blackpool Locarno ballroom. But his undoubtedly deserved promotion was sadly short lived when, during the season, 39 year old David was accidentally drowned in a sailing accident; an extremely sad end to a slice of dance band history.

Members of the band soldiered on for a short while under the leadership of trumpet player Terry Heaney. Bernard Rabin had sold Wimbledon Palais to a 'bingo' operator in 1958, it eventually became a furniture store, and The Rabin Agency was sold to Mecca in 1968.

From late thirties the Rabin band was recording with Rex and later Decca. During the mid-40's they made very few records until 1947 when Wally Moody at E.M.I signed them for Parlophone. Recording some good swinging big band numbers, their first issue was a version of Glenn Miller's 'Moonlight serenade'. Many of the band's late forties arrangements were by Alyn Ainsworth. During the 1950's the band also recorded on the Polygon, Oriole and Embassy labels.

DECCA (Music While You Work series)				(both			
MW 321	Jun 45	'Don't fence me in / Sleigh-ride in July / A	little on the lonely side /	v. Diane)	F 2344	Mar 49	'I'd give the world to you sweetheart (v. Bob
There goes that				Marion Davis)	F 2348	Apl 49	'You're still the only girl in the world / Far away places (both v.
song again'				Bob Dale)	F 2353	May 49	'By the sleepy lagoon / Carnival (both feature
MW 322	Jun 45	'My guys come back / Ac-cent-tchu-ate the	positive / Boston bounce / We've something to	Benstead)	F 2368	Jun 49	'Cherokee / Shine'
sing about'				F 2369	Jly 49	'Put your shoes on Lucy (v. Marion Davis) /	
MW 356	Nov 45	'Symphony / I'm in love with two sweethearts	/ The gypsy / On the Atcheson	I'm beginning to miss you (v.			
Topeka				Marjorie Daw)	F 2373	Aug 49	'Don't tell a soul / Roses of Picardy'
Santa Fe'				F 2382	Oct 49	'Leicester Square rag / You're breaking my	
MW 357	Nov 45	'I'd rather be me / There I've said it again /	There must be a way / Let him	heart (v.			
go let him				Marjorie Daw)	F 2389	Dec 49	'Sweet as you (v. Dennis Hale) / On your toes'
tarry'				F 2400	Feb 50	'Jealous heart (v. Marion Davis & Marjorie	
PARLOPHONE				Daw) / Someday my heart			
F 2215	May 47	'Hamp's boogie woogie / Moonlight serenade'		will awake'			
F 2240	Sep 47	'Leave us leap / Swing low sweet chariot'		F 2404	Mar 50	'Don't cry Joe (v. Marion Davis & David Ede	
F 2246	Oct 47	'A garden in the rain (v. Bob Dale) / My first	love, my last love for always	Ensemble) / Why not now (v.			
(v. Diana)				Marion Davis	&		
F 2248	Nov 47	'How are things in Glocca Morra? / I'm not in love (both v.		Dennis Hale)	F 2414	Jun 50	'She wore a yellow ribbon (v. Marion Davis,
Bob Dale)				Dennis Hale & David Ede			
F 2260	Dec 47	'I wonder who's kissing her now (v. Bob Dale)	/ That's my desire	Ensemble) /			
(v. Diane)				That's a plenty'			
F 2265	Jan 48	'Dancing Time : I'll see you in my dreams /	Mighty	F 2421	Jly 50	'Basin Street blues / Canadian capers'	
lak' a rose'				F 2429	Oct 50	'Sam's song (v. Dennis Hale & David Ede) /	
F 2270	Feb 48	'Dancing Time : The shadow waltz /		Mona Lisa (v.			
June night'				Dennis Hale)	F 2435	Dec 50	'Have I told you lately that I love you (v. Marion
F 2280	Mar 48	'The flower seller (v. Bob Dale) / Eniloro (Voo		Davis & Marjorie Daw) / The			
doo moon)'				Charleston'	F 2447	Jan 51	'All my life / Just say I love her (v.
F 2284	Apl 48	'The wishing waltz / Whispering'		Dennis Hale)	F 2455	Apl 51	'Patricia (v. Dennis Hale & David Ede Ensemble) / Listening to the
F 2291	May 48	'Intermission riff / Washington whirligig'		green grass			
F 2297	Jun 48	'Lonesome Lane / Oh my achin' heart (both v.		grow (v. Marion Davis &			
Bob Dale)				Marjorie Daw)	F 2463	Jun 51	'Pink champagne / Rotten row'
F 2302	Jly 48	'Down by the old mill stream / My girls an	Irish girl (both	F 2469	Jly 51	'My love for you (v. Marjorie Daw) / The	
v. Bob Dale)				bridal waltz (v. Marjorie Daw &			
F 2304	Aug 48	'You can't be true, dear (v. Bob Dale) / Toolie-oolie-doolie		Dennis Hale)	F 2476	Nov 51	'Longing for you (v. Patti Forbes & Marjorie
(v. Diane)				Daw) / The world is mine			
F 2307	Sep 48	'Rhapsody in blue / Interlude'		tonight			
F 2317	Oct 48	'When love has passed you by / Only passing clouds		(v.			
(both v. Diane)				Dennis Hale)	F 2481	Jan 52	'Down yonder (v. David Ede Ensemble) /
F 2322	Nov 48	'Promise in your eyes (v. Diane) / Girl in blue (v.		Down the trail of			
Alan Dean)				(v. Marjorie Daw & Patti			
F 2325	Dec 48	'Opus in pastels / Painted rhythm'		Forbes)	F 2490	Jun 52	'Silver and gold (v. Patti Forbes) / It's a long way (v.
F 2331	Jan 49	Love somebody (v. Bob Dale & Marion Davis)	/ The pussycat song (v.	PF & DEE)			
Marion Davis)							
F 2337	Feb 49	'It all comes back to me now / Susy					

F 2497 Jly 52 'Blacksmith blues (v. Patti Forbes) /
Lady love (v. David Ede
Ensemble)'
POLYGON

P 1086 Nov 53 'Crazy man crazy / Forgive me
(both v. Mel
Gaynor)'
ORIOLE

CB 1297 Jly 54 'Honey babe / Rumbango'
CB 1317 Jan 56 'The big three / The draw'

EMBASSY

WB 141 Jly 55 'Bluefoot / Elephant tango'
WB 143 Jly 55 'Dance with me Henry / My one sin
(both v.
Patti Forbes)'
WB 146 Sep 55 'Sincerely / No such luck
(both v. Benny Lee & The
Three Oscars)'

PYE (David Ede and the Rabin Rock)

N 15280 Aug 60 'Easy go / The blue bird'

DECCA (labeled as *The Syncopators, this was a
nine
piece outfit formed from members
of the Rabin
band led by Arthur
Greenslade*)

F 11359 May 61 'Everything stops for tea (v.
Babsie Kay) / If I
Ivor Gerard)'
had a talking picture of you (v.
Ivor Gerard)'

PYE (David Ede & the Go Man Go Men)

N 15329 Jan 61 'Obsession / Bootnik'
N 15370 Aug 61 'Ding dong John / Last night'
(David Ede & the Rabin Band)

N 15394 Nov 61 'Twelfth Street rag / No hats on
Ilkley'

N 15417 Feb 62 'Twistin' those meeces to pieces /
Twistin' the trad'

Harry RABINOWITZ

A classically trained pianist, Harry is probably remembered best for his many years with the BBC, where for seven years during the fifties he was conductor of the Revue Orchestra. Born in Johannesburg on 20th March 1916, he went to university there and studied music. He was conductor of a variety orchestra on the South African Broadcasting network until 1946, when he came to London to continue his studies. As a solo pianist he aired on many shows including 'Variety Bandbox' and 'Piano Playtime', and in August 1948 Philip Green signed him (replacing Phil Moody who had gone to the States) for his 'The Kid from Stratford' orchestra at London's Princes Theatre. Harry worked in several West End theatre orchestras and in 1950, again for Phil Green, led for the show 'Golden City' at The Adelphi. During the early fifties Harry was associated with many productions at the Empress Hall, Earls Court including the annual pantomime. He conducted the Robert Farnon assembled

orchestra for 'Babes in the Wood on Ice' in 1950 and led again for 'Puss in Boots' in 1951. Harry conducted the 24 piece orchestra for the Claud Langdon - Henry Hall ice spectacular 'London Melody' at the hall in May 1951 and the ice musical 'Ranch in the Rockies' for the same production team, in June 1952.

In 1953 Harry's skills as an arranger and musical director were endorsed by the BBC when they appointed him as leader of their Revue Orchestra, a position he retained until he transferred to BBC Television in August 1960. Working closely in association with Eric Robinson he stayed with BBC TV for eight years, before deflecting to ITV.

Harry spent much of the eighties as a freelance. He was MD of 'The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby' at the Aldwych in June 1980, and 'Cats' at the New London from May 1981.

Apparently Harry is still around and occasionally appears as guest conductor on various classical and light music concerts. In a 2008 article Harry gave to the Portland Tribune, he told the newspaper that he had lived in Portland, Oregon for over ten years, but each year when the weather gets cooler, with second wife Mitzy, they head off for his other house in Provence, France.

Steve RACE

Thinking back to the 1950's and 60's pianist Steve Race seemed to be always either on the radio or TV, a fact confirmed by the schedules of the time.

From Lincoln, he was born in 1921 and studied at the Royal Academy of Music. During his wartime service in the R.A.F Steve played in a dance band led by guitarist Howard Lucraft and continued to work with him until Lucraft left for America in the late forties. He also played in the bands of Nat Temple, Harry Leader and freelanced with other units. Steve arranged for top leaders like Cyril Stapleton and Ted Heath and recorded with Woolf Phillips, the Harry Hayes swinging band and was a member of Bosworth's Modern Jazz Group that included top sax player Freddie Gardner, Johnny Douglas on accordion, Mickey Rome bass and Ray Cooper drums. The group put several hop sides on Bosworth Music Publisher's own label, including a Steve Race original 'Quintessence'. Steve also recorded for one of Bosworth's rivals, Paxton.

Not content with playing, Steve was a regular feature writer and record critic for the musical journals 'Musical Express' and 'Melody Maker'. He composed and arranged scores for films and shows and with his wife Bunti wrote 'What's cooking in cabaret' for the 1948 film 'Calling Paul Temple' and with Sid Colin 'Lady on the loose' for the same film. Celia Lipton sang both songs on screen. Steve and Sid also wrote 'Home sweet home' that was sung by Avril Angers in the film 'The Brass Monkey'.

As I've already mentioned Steve was a busy radio performer. By 1950 he had for some time been accompanist and musical arranger for Hughie Green's 'Opportunity Knocks' on Radio Luxembourg and from October that year had his own show 'A Date with Steve Race' on the same

station. On this series contestants from 'Opportunity Knocks' were given another radio airing with full professional backing. Artists on the first show, broadcast 15th October 1950, included an unknown singer by the name of David Whitfield.

On the BBC he was a music-scene roving reporter for the Saturday evening 'Top Score' series and in April 1951 began his 'Man About Music' series, broadcast on Thursdays, on which he continued to comment on the musical world while illustrating his ideas musically at the keyboard. His quintet backed singers Benny Lee, Patti Lewis, Jean Campbell, Franklyn Boyd and The Coronets on many of radio's 'Sing It Again' shows throughout the fifties.. Following a visit to States in 1957, Steve recounted the trip with appropriate music on his 'Race Across America' programme.

Steve led the group on television's first 'teenage' show 'Teleclub', compered by Benny Lee and Jean Aubrey and first seen on Friday 9th October 1953. When ITV opened up in 1955 he was retained by a company formed by Sir John Barbirolli to supply the Associated-Rediffusion channel with musical programmes and consequently arranged and led the orchestra on many of their light music and variety shows. A later fifties series he presented was 'Dial for Music' on which viewers phoned in song requests for Steve and his quartet to play. Vocalists on the series were Dennis Lotis and Benny Lee and the first show went out on Christmas Eve 1959.

Steve compered 'Jazz For Moderns' and several other BBC programmes and is well remembered as chairman and question master on Radio Four's long running 'My Music' panel game, which began in January 1967 and ran until 1994. Team members competing to answer his questions were Frank Muir, Dennis Norden, Ian Wallace and David Franklin (later replaced by John Amis).

I believe Steve's busy workload was eventually curtailed by serious health problems that forced him to give up much of his radio and TV work. In March 1991, Radio Two's John Dunn devoted one of his shows to a celebration of Steve's fifty years in broadcasting. Steve died on 22nd June 2009 aged 88.

Steve Race Recordings

PAXTON (*Bop Group*)

PR 513 Aug 49 'Bugle call rag / Marzipan'
PR 514 Aug 49 'Microcosmo / Vertigo'

BOSWORTH (*Modern Jazz Group*)

BC 1225 Nov 49 'Quintessence / Rebop revels'
BC 1226 Nov 49 'Baltimore bebop / Boppin' the boogie'

COLUMBIA

DB 2746 Oct 50 (*multi tracked piano solo*) 'Mambo jambo /

Cavaquinho'
DB 2827 Mar 51 (*with Strings*) 'All the things you are /

So in love'
DX 1750 May 51 (*on Columbia Cavalcade 12 inch*

selection)

'Dream of Olwin' (*re-issued on*

45rpm

SCD

2008 in 1953)

DB 2937 Oct 51 (*multi-track solos*) 'Dizzy fingers /

Pernambuco'

DB 3949 Jun 57 (*with Lucille Mapp*) 'Jamie boy /
Moonlight

in Vermont'

GALA

GSP 802 Oct 59 'Hindustan / Ring-ding (own
composition)'

GSP 811 Feb 60 'In for trouble / Nicola (own
composition)'

PARLOPHONE

R 4681 Aug 60 'Follow the Seine / High tide, low
tide

(*both own*

compositions)'

R 4730 Jan 61 'Like Latin / In Paris, in love'

R 4808 61 (*S R group*) 'Stop Look Listen TV
theme /

Crosstrap'

R 4840 61 'Paris by candlelight / Faraway

music'

R 4894 62 (*S R orch*) 'Ring-ding / Nicola'

R 4981 Jan 63 (*S R group*) 'Here and now / The Pied
Piper'

R 5041 63 (*S R orch*) 'Legend of the lake /
Rip Van

Winkle'

R 5076 63 " 'The swinging bells /

Jacaranda'

R 5347 65 " 'Like old times / Jack of
hearts'

R 5524 66 'Old McDonald had a band / Pavane'

The Radio Revellers

As popular in the late forties and early fifties as many a beat group would be a decade later, The Radio Revellers were more than just a vocal quartet, indeed they were a group that worked hard at being a complete entertainment act.

It was an advert in a 1934 'Melody Maker' stating that "Two boys and a guitar wish to meet two others interested in forming a vocal quartet" that brought together Freddie (Buddy) Holmes, Arthur Reed, Harry Hawes and Jack Hazelton. Calling themselves The Four Crotchets they soon realised that their imitation of the Mills Brothers was not taking them very far and so began concentrating on comedy and hill-billy numbers, with slick arrangements they devised themselves.

Winning of the Hidden Talent competition at Streatham Locarno brought them a week long booking at the venue during January 1935 and they began appearing regularly with the Tony Hunter band at Brockley. Their first broadcast was on Saturday 4th August 1935. Having secured a contract to promote Philco radios, they then changed their name to The Philco Four, but by 1937 had changed again to become The Radio Revellers.

Early broadcasts were mainly on the Overseas Service but a national BBC airing on 'Radio Rodeo' on 3rd June 1937 brought them to the

notice of pianist-bandleader Carroll Gibbons and he took a liking to the four lads giving them much help and encouragement. Through his connection with the Savoy Hotel, where one of the directors, a Mr. Van der Burgh, was also a director of the Unilever business, he got them several appearances during 1938 on Radio Luxembourg's 'Spry Broadcast Theatre'.

At the outbreak of WW II the act broke up when they all joined the services. Jack Hazelton was killed in a flying accident and when war was over Harry Hawes decided to return to a business career. This left Art and Freddie with a problem; did they give up, start again as a duo, or find replacements for Jack and Harry? Choosing the latter they recruited Al Fernhead (who had been with the Six Harmonists before the war) and Stan Emery (previously with the (British) Four Aces) to join them and in 1946, with a well rehearsed act of songs and comedy, The Radio Revellers were once more back on the road. The BBC, keen to encourage any pre-war artists leaving the forces and returning to show business, put them into Henry Hall's 'Guest Night' show on 29th October and a 'Monday Night at Eight' spot on 18th November and gradually a number of other bookings came along.

It wasn't long before they were signed up by Jack Hylton to appear in his new Crazy Gang show, 'Together Again', that opened at London's Victoria Palace on 14th April 1947. Early reviews report them "stopping the show with their brilliant act".

Early in 1947 Columbia Records approached the group with a view to them making records (although they were not new to the medium, having made a few recordings as The Four Crochets and The Philco Four). First disc for Columbia was, not unsurprisingly, a semi-comedy number with their version of 'Open the Door Richard'. Over the next five years Columbia issued a couple of dozen Radio Revellers records, none of them destined for the hit parade, but still eagerly awaited by their many fans.

With many troops still serving abroad the BBC continued to produce many variety programmes for the overseas service and the Revellers had their own series, 'Radio Revelry', from June 1947. They were resident group on Stanley Black's overseas service show 'Black Magic' as well as his Home Service series 'Show Time' and were often guests on 'The Song is Ended' with Billy Ternent and his orchestra.

In June they appeared on the newly revived BBC television service, something they rarely repeated for as Freddie Holmes admitted many years later, they never felt comfortable working within the strict controls that television imposed on artists in those days.

By October 1947, so great was demand for their services, each evening after the Victoria Palace show was over the boys dashed over to the Orchid Room to appear in late night cabaret. In fact having been back in the business little more than a year, they themselves admitted their success was more than they ever hoped for. The reason had much to do with the quality of their act which was never allowed to get stale. They were always rehearsing new routines for which Art Reed did most of their arrangements.

Their Desert Island Disc sketch on radio's 'Music Hall' on 4th October, where they performed all the different gramophone records, had the audience applauding so much the announcer was unable to introduce the next item. On 16th November 1947 they were on the BBC's 'Jubilee Variety Show' that was broadcast on radio and television, and on the same day began a regular appearance on that radio series where madness reigned supreme, 'Ignorance is Bliss'. It featured Michael Moore, Harold Berens and Gladys Hay as the team totally refusing to give any sensible answer to questions put by quiz-master Stewart McPherson. Without doubt The Radio Revellers were now one of Britain's top variety acts.

Over the Christmas, New Year holiday period they were on radio just about every day including 'December Review' on the 23rd (having already appeared in the October and November Review). They were on 'Band Parade' and 'Christmas Party' on Christmas Day and 'Music Hall' on the 27th. And it didn't stop there, on 28th January 1948 they were on 'Variety Concert Hall' broadcast from a naval barracks at Petersfield, 'Variety Bandbox' on 1st February, several 'Workers Playtime' shows and finally their own well deserved radio series 'Four Men One Song' began an eight week series on 3rd May 1948.

All this time they were still one of the big hits of the Crazy Gang show at the Victoria Palace (Freddie Holmes married one of the shows dancers, 26 year old Kay Nicholson on Sunday 14th August 1949) and this success was recognised with an invitation to appear on the Royal Variety Performance at the London Palladium in November 1948, where they performed a re-vamped version of their Desert Island Disc routine. In December a second series of 'Four Men One Song' began and also an association with 'Starlight Hour', featuring Peter Yorke and his Orchestra, that extended into the fifties. The Revellers appeared in the 1949 comedy film 'High Jinks in Society', that starred Ben Wrigley and Netta Westcott and also featured The Squadronaires. In the film they sing four songs 'High jinx in Mayfair' (the original title of the film), 'Loch Lomond', 'Chinatown' and 'Hill-Billy band'. They also provided the voices for some cartoon films, 'The House Cat' and 'The Cuckoo', made by G-B Animation, and did some Esso petrol advertisement cartoons.

Although primarily a vocal group their stage presentation was slick and as such they were always in demand on variety tours around the country. Over the following years this became a way of life to our four lads, as during the early to mid 1950's The Radio Revellers continued to ride the crest of a popularity wave.

Highlights were the 1950 pantomime 'Jack and the Beanstalk' at Bolton's Theatre Royal with singer Lee Lawrence; a summer season in 1951 at the Palace Theatre, Blackpool with Syd & Max Harrison and panto again in 1953 in 'Dick Whittington' at Coventry Hippodrome with Reg Dixon. It was 'Dick Whittington' again for 1954 at Manchester's Palace Theatre with Joy Nichols and Brian Reece, and they did it all over again the following year at the Empire Liverpool with Joan Regan replacing Joy Nichols. In August 1955 they were back at the London Palladium for

the first time since their 1948 Royal Variety Performance, for two weeks supporting Guy Mitchell.

By mid 1952 the association with Columbia Records had come to an end and the Revellers later moved over to the smaller Polygon label, where they made possibly their most remembered side and only chart entry, 'West of Zanzibar' from the 1954 film. Supporting the star of the film, Anthony Steel, the record just crept into the New Musical Express Top Twelve chart at No.11 in September. Another popular number (and my own personal favourite) was 'My helpless heart' a song they wrote themselves.

On radio there were more of their own series and a new association, this time with Charlie Chester, first in his 'Come to Charlee' and later 'A Proper Charlie' radio series, plus all the other one-off variety and music hall radio programmes. It was bandleader Geraldo who suggested that the Radio Times was their diary, they were in it so much.

As the second half of the 50's decade rolled on it was obvious a change in the public's musical taste was being influenced by a continual rock and roll import from across the Atlantic and an upsurge of young home grown talent (and often no-talent) willing to copy. Entertainers such as the Revellers were finding bookings harder to come by.

The act almost came to an end one Sunday in July 1956 when the car in which they were travelling to a booking at Cayton Bay Holiday Camp skidded on wet roads, hit a tree and twice rolled over, but the lads were unhurt and carried on in a taxi.

In December 1956 they returned to the Victoria Palace for a season in another Crazy Gang show 'These Foolish Kings'. But by 1959 the four were sensible enough to realise the changes in the business were against them and although still maintaining a loyal following; they had not long completed an 18 week radio series 'Join in and Sing' with the Maple Leaf Four and Jackie Brown at the organ; nevertheless they decided it best to voluntarily pack in before they were forced to and the long and successful life of The Radio Revellers finally came to an end. The decision is immortalised in a BBC internal memo dated 16th March 1959 sent to all variety producers, advising them that The Radio Revellers act had disbanded and was no longer available for broadcasting.

Art Reed and Stan Emery both went to work for Shell Petroleum, whilst Al Fernhead became a shop manager and Freddie Holmes a salesman. Art died in 1981 and both Al and Stan in 1988. Freddie Holmes was still going strong in the late-nineties.

The Radio Revellers Recordings COLUMBIA

FB 3301 May 47 'Open the door Richard / Uncle Remus said'

FB 3309 Jun 47 'Dear old Donegal / Doin' what comes naturally'

FB 3311 Jly 47 'Cement mixer / Hawaiian war chant'
FB 3346 Oct 47 'Heartaches / I'm afraid to love you'
FB 3349 Nov 47 'They didn't believe me / Peg o' my heart'

FB 3375 Mar 48 'Shoemaker's serenade / Can you look me in the eyes'

FB 3394 Apl 48 'Three little fishes / Grandfather's clock'

FB 3411 Aug 48 'I may be wrong / My pretty girl'

FB 3415 Sep 48 'Nice to know you care / Figaro'

FB 3440 Nov 48 'Somebody stole my rose coloured glasses /

Summer

sweetheart'

FB 3465 Mar 49 'I kissed a girl and made her cry / Far

away places'

FB 3485 May 49 'Maybe it's because I'm a Londoner /

Broken record'

FB 3504 Jly 49 'Blue ribbon gal / Till we meet again'
DB 2594 Nov 49 (with Bud Flanagan) 'Wanderin' along /

A shanty in old

shanty town'

DB 2640 Feb 50 'Dear hearts and gentle people / She wore a

yellow ribbon'

DB 2666 Apl 50 'The French can can polka / Cherry stones'

DB 2700 Jun 50 'Across the meadow / Choo'n gum'

DB 2754 Nov 50 'Steamboat Bill / All my homeland'

DB 2785 Dec 50 'The ball of Kirriemuir / Stick it on the wall

Mrs. Riley'

DB 2858 May 51 'Listening to the green grass grow / As long as the river

flows on'

DB 2922 Sep 51 'Sweet violets / Music man'

DB 2976 Dec 51 'I love the sunshine of your smile / Ciribiribin

on the mandolin' (acc by Philip

Green orch)

DB 3027 Feb 52 'Undecided / Slow coach' (acc by

Geraldo orch)

DB 3106 Jly 52 'Raindrops / Boom song' (acc by Norrie

Paramor orch)

POLYGON

P 1081 Nov 53 'Breaker of hearts / Don't ever say'

P 1090 Dec 53 'Istanbul / If you've ever been in love'

P 1092 Jan 54 'Oh my papa / Don't ever leave me' (acc by

Geoff

Love orch)

P 1107 Mar 54 'Bell bottom blues / An armful of love' (acc by

Geoff

Love orch)

P 1114 Apl 54 'West of Zanzibar (with Anthony Steel) /

Who cares' (acc by Jackie

Brown Music)

P 1122 Jul 54 'The monkeys of Gibraltar / Roll me home'

P 1141 Nov 54 (with Dr. Barnardo's Children) 'Mrs. Santa

Claus / There'll always be a

Christmas'

P 1149 Jan 55 (with Dorothy Squires) 'With all my heart /

White wings'

P 1154 Feb 55 'The flame (with Anthony Steele) / Under the

Southern Cross' (acc by Norman

Warren orch)

P 1162 Apl 55 (with Dorothy Squires) 'When I grow too old to

dream /

Blue blue blue'
 P 1165 May 55 'Boomerang / My helpless heart' (*acc by*
Laurie
Johnson orch)
 P 1169 Jun 55 (*with Petula Clark*) 'The pendulum
 song /
Crazy Otto rag (*featuring Joe*
Henderson

on piano)'
 PYE NIXA

 N 15011 Nov 55 'Arrivederci darling / In Madrid' (*acc by*
Geoff
Love orch)
 N 15023 Jan 56 (re-issue of Polygon P 1114)
 N 15062 Jly 56 'Sweet Fanny Adams / Lucky Pierre'

Lynnette RAE

Lynnette began her singing career in musical comedy around 1947 when she joined the chorus of 'Twopence Coloured' at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith. A year later she was playing Aurthur Askey's sister in 'The Kid from Stratford', moving on to replace Muriel Smith in 'Sauce Tartare' at London's Cambridge Theatre. Visually very attractive, Lynn closed the 1940's in pantomime, 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' at Ipswich Hippodrome.

Lynnette's first recording, in April 1950, was 'But me I love you' the first of two duets with Benny Lee. She also sang with Benny on radio shows including 'Variety Fanfare' and 'First House'. During the fifties she appeared in West End cabaret, played variety theatres and principle boy in pantomime. It was while touring that she met and fell for a currently unknown fellow vocalist, Val Doonican and by the early sixties had become Mrs. Doonican, giving up the stage to raise a family.

Lynnette Rae Recordings

DECCA (*both with Benny Lee*)

F 9407 May 50 'But me I love you'
 F 9425 Jun 50 'Oh you sweet one'

The Raindrops

The Raindrops were formed in 1958 by Len Beadle, allegedly as a way to stop his girlfriend Jackie Lee from going off on a long tour of Cyprus without him, but she went anyway. Initially the members were Len and Jackie with Vince Hill (later to make his name as a solo artist) and Irene Miller. All seasoned singers, Vince had been with Teddy Foster, Len had played trombone for Oscar Rabin while attractive blonde Jackie, a Canadian, and Irene had sung with many top bands.

Although the two girl, two boy line up looked good visually, it was soon decided a better sound came from three boys and a girl. So in early 1959 Irene Miller made way for ex-Oscar Rabin vocalist Johnny Worth. Johnny was already forging a new career as a songwriter and The Raindrops' recording 'Italian style' was just about the first of his compositions to make it on

to disc.

From the outset, the group concentrated on radio and television work, becoming regulars on several series. From 22nd January 1959 they were on the ITV series 'The Boys Request' beamed from Tyne Tees in Newcastle and from 18th April replaced The Kingpins as regular group on BBC TV's Saturday rock series 'Drumbeat'. They were one of the mainstays of radio's 'Parade of the Pops' for over two years. Their record for Parlophone met with little public response and the company don't appear to have asked for a follow up, so it was left to the small Oriole label to put them back on disc a year later.

Soon the group added cabaret, at London's Embassy Club and the Dorchester Hotel, and a variety tour with Ken Dodd to their achievements. The Raindrops ended 1959 touring Odeon and Gaumont cinemas in 'Cinderella' with Edna Savage.

They played a six week season with Shirley Bassey at Coventry from 18th April 1960, followed by summer season in 'Show Time' at Torquay Pavilion, with Ken Dodd and Janie Marden.

Still on 'Parade of the Pops', they were now regulars on Joe Henderson's 'Mr. Piano Plays' radio series, and often turned up on 'Workers' Playtime' and 'Midday Music Hall' shows. Complementing their recent summer show the group were now regulars on Janie Marden's TV series 'Girl in Calico' and Ken Dodd often had them as guests on his show. A busy group, one reviewer observed that they produced Britain's finest vocal group sound and if they were American they would be "top of the bill".

By the close of 1960 the line up had changed, with the loss of Johnny Worth (by now he was too busy writing hit songs for artists like Adam Faith), Brian Adams taking his place. Len and Jackie were now Mr. and Mrs. Beadle.

The Raindrops regularly returned to Coventry Theatre, that maintained a policy of extended variety shows, where they supported stars like Tommy Steele, Eddie Calvert, Eve Boswell and comedian Jimmy James.. Vince Hill moved on to his solo career in 1962, replaced by John Putnam formally of the Kingpins, but by 1964 with rock and roll beating the airways a close harmony group like the Raindrops were no longer wanted and so they quietly disappeared.

In 1967 Brian Adams formed a trio with Don Archell and ex-Vernon's Girl Lyn Cornell calling themselves The Raindrops. They did some club work and recorded a single for CBS, but the group quickly folded.

The Raindrops Recordings

PARLOPHONE

R 4559 May 59 'Italian style / Along came Jones'

ORIOLE

CB 1544 Mar 60 'If I had my life to live again /
Let's make a

foursome'

CB 1555 Jun 60 'Banjo boy / Crazy rhythm'

CB 1595 Jan 61 'Will you love me tomorrow /
 Raindrops'

CB 1702 Feb 62 (with Jackie Lee) 'There's no one in the whole wide world / (I was the) Last one to know'
 CB 1707 Feb 62 Paintin' the town with teardrops / A letter from Anne'
 CB 1727 May 62 (with Jackie Lee) There goes the lucky one / I built my world around a dream'
 CB 1757 62 (with Jackie Lee) 'Party lights / Midnight'
 CB 1800 Feb 63 (with Jackie Lee) 'The end of the world / Goodbye is such a lonely word'
 FONTANA
 H 463 64 'Book of love / I won't care'
 CBS (later trio)
 202669 67 'Got to find a reason / Foolman'

Freddy RANDALL

Born in Clapton, east London on 6th May 1921 his first instrument was violin, but by the age of 16 a love of jazz music had caused a change to trumpet. In 1937 Freddy joined the semi-pro Darktown Strutters and a year later Will de Barr's band, eventually forming his own outfit that he named the St. Louis Four.

Following war time service, having been invalided out of the Rifle Brigade in 1943, he formed a semi-pro Dixieland band but a year later broke it up to join Freddy Mirfield's Garbage Men and with them won "best trumpet" honours in various 'Melody Maker' contests. When Mirfield turned professional and adopted a more commercial sound, Freddy left and re-formed his own traditional band that regularly played to packed houses at Cleveland Rhythm Club, Cooks Ferry Inn in Edmonton. Line up in the summer of 1948 was Freddy on trumpet leading Eddie Harvey trombone, Bruce Turner alto-sax & clarinet, Bobby Coram guitar, Al Mead piano, Jack Surridge bass and Harry Miller drums. They made some recordings on their own Cleveland label.

By the 1950's the band had become one of the most featured small jazz units on radio, broadcasting on 'Jazz Club', 'Band Parade' and 'BBC Ballroom' often using Dinah Kaye as vocalist although by now blues singer Beryl Bryden was part of the team having become Freddy's office manager.

By 1951 there was a new line up, which on their first Parlophone single in April featured Freddy, with Geoff Sowden trombone, Bernie Stanton clarinet, Stan Butcher piano, Denys Wright guitar, Ronnie Stone bass and Lennie Hastings drums. During its existence the band had constant personnel changes.

A busy touring band, playing mainly one-night-stands, they also worked seasons at venues like Edinburgh's West End Restaurant, Green's Playhouse in Glasgow and St. George's Hall, Guernsey. Early in 1956 they made a short but successful U.S. tour.

In 1958 poor health forced Freddy to break up the band and he concentrated on his booking

agency and a hotel he owned in Brighton. He opened his own 'Stage Door' club in the town and sat in with various bands. Over the following decades he re-formed his band on several occasions, while keeping an eye on the retirement home business he now had. Freddy retired to Devon in the early nineties and died in 1999.

Freddy Randall Band Recordings

CLEVELAND (no catalogue numbers)

48 'Tin roof blues / If I could be with you (v. Eddie Harvey)'
 48 'Jazz band ball / Hurry on down (v. Beryl Bryden)'
 48 'Cook's Ferry parade / Lonesome road (v. F R)'
 48 'Viper mad / Wolverine blues'

TEMPO

A 45 50 'Dark night blues / Washington and Lee swing'
 A 49 50 'Riverside blues / Jazz club stomp'
 A 55 50 'Georgia cake walk / Sugar foot strut'

PARLOPHONE

R 3382 Apl 51 'Since my best girl turned me down / That's a plenty'
 R 3393 May 51 'Jenny's ball / South'
 R 3412 Jly 51 'Lea bridge stomp / Ostrich walk'
 R 3426 Sep 51 'I want a big butter and egg man' (Graeme Bell band on reverse)
 R 3469 Dec 51 'Won't you come home Bill Bailey? /

Sensation rag'
 R 3494 Mar 52 'Baby won't you please come home / Tight lines'
 R 3525 May 52 'I ain't gonna give nobody none o' this jelly roll / Dark night blues'
 R 3545 Jly 52 (with Billy Banks) 'Walkin' the dog /

Tishomingo blues'
 R 3573 Oct 52 'Original Dixieland one-step / Clarinet marmalade'
 R 3603 Dec 52 'Sheik of Araby / Smokey Mokes'
 R 3622 Jan 53 'Ory's Creole trombone / Gone away blues'
 R 3681 May 53 'Way down yonder in New Orleans / At the jazz

band ball'
 R 3709 Jly 53 'Professor Jazz / I'm comin' Virginia'
 R 3750 Oct 53 'Twelve for six / Copenhagen'
 R 3835 Mar 54 'Carolina in the morning / Tin roof blues'
 R 3853 May 54 'Muskrat ramble / Shine'
 R 3934 Nov 54 'Someday sweetheart / Hotter than that'
 R 3980 Feb 55 'Royal Garden blues / Sunday'
 R 4006 Apl 55 'Farewell blues / Black and blue'
 R 4040 Jly 55 'Riverboat shuffle / Washington and Lee

swing'
 R 4059 Sep 55 'My tiny band is chosen / Memphis blues'
 R 4093 Nov 55 'Hindustan / November blues'
 R 4191 Jly 56 'Ain't misbehavin' / Ja da'
 R 4223 Oct 56 'Sugar / That da da strain'
 R 4322 Jun 57 'Jealousy / Esox'
 R 5062 Aug 63 'Anvil chorus / Elizabeth'

Julie RAYNE

Almost totally forgotten now, Julie was never a 'big name' during her time in the spotlight. That's despite the fact she was attractive, had a great voice and some good songs, including a couple written by popular songwriter Jerry Lordan.

Hailing from Darlington, where at the age of six Julie was already singing to an audience - mainly servicemen - at her grandmother's café. By the time she left school she was vocalist with a local dance band in the evening, whilst training as a journalist by day. Eventually she decided to try and make singing a full time profession and came to London where she secured work around the many clubs.

Described as having a voice similar to Kay Starr, she worked with the Bob Mickleburgh band and at Johnny Hawksworth's club. And for something entirely different, during 1958 she toured with Dr. Crock and his Crackpots, joining in the comedy. By mid-59 Julie was back on the London club circuit while making some song promotion recordings for music publishers and when one of these reached Norman Newall's ears he invited her to come and record for H.M.V. with her first disc 'Waltz me around' out later in the year.

Early 1960 Julie toured in a rock package show headed by Adam Faith and broadcast on 'Saturday Club'. She also appeared with the vocal team on several of the 'Sing it Again' series and the BBC's 'Festival of Dance Music'. Late 1960 she began an eight month season at Streatham Locarno singing with the Denny Boyce orchestra, but continued to make regular radio appearances. Julie also played at least one panto, 'Puss in Boots' at Peterborough Empire in 1961. In 1963 she appeared in the first series of commercial television's 'Stars and Garters', a show set in an imaginary pub, which also featured Clinton Ford, Vince Hill, Tommy Bruce and Kathy Kirby. Later reports suggest she moved over to the acting side of show business and even into directing.

Julie Rayne Recordings	
H.M.V.	
POP 665	59 'Waltz me around / Love where can you be'
POP 785	60 'Bim bam bom / One more time'
POP 868	61 'Green with envy, purple with passion /
	My first
romance'	
WINDSOR	
WPS 128	'You can't come back / Straight to your arms'

RECORD LABELS

Just a brief reminder of what various labels were

available at the record counter during the forties and fifties. And for a start, that counter for most of us, wouldn't have been in a record store, but more likely a radio, cycle or toy shop, or a department store. Perhaps even a supermarket - the first Premier Supermarket opened in Earls Court in September 1951.

During the first half of the 20th century many record labels came and went as small manufacturers sought to make a killing out of this new technology. Many large stores had their own record label; Woolworth sold its own records from 1923, but dropped the practice before WWII concentrating on sheet music until it introduced its Embassy brand in 1954. Others included Marks & Spencer, Boots, Lewis's, Selfridge's, Gamage's, Whiteley's, Curry's and Peacock's, but none of these survived beyond the thirties.

Some stores selling nothing but records did exist, probably the most famous being the H.M.V store in London's Oxford Street, that was opened by Sir Edward Elgar on 20th July 1921. Well known bookseller Hatchard's opened the first record store located in London's Piccadilly in December 1954. The first record store ever is reported as being the one operated by the Berliner company on Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, USA that opened in 1897.

By the late forties, in this country, most popular artists of the day were the monopoly of just two big record companies, Decca and E.M.I. The Decca brand came to prominence during the First World War as a supplier of wind up gramophones supplied to the troops. In 1929 stockbroker Edward Lewis bought the business and immediately launched the Decca Record Company that he steered with great success right up until his death in 1980. Big star names to appear on the blue Decca label during the forties and fifties included bandleader Ted Heath and his singers Dickie Valentine and Lita Roza, plus Vera Lynn, Winifred Atwell, Joan Regan, Mantovani, Charlie Kunz, Jimmy Young, Anne Shelton, Edmundo Ros, Lee Lawrence, Billy Cotton, Tommy Steele, The Stargazers, The Keynotes and many many more. It will be noted from this list that Decca was then almost exclusively the home of tried and tested British artists, but it was successful and sold a lot of discs.

Decca's American connection was the London label that it formed in 1934 and on which it issued UK produced recordings onto the US market. From the late forties this became a two way event with American sourced tracks being issued here on London (later London-American). Decca were also, from 1948, the UK supplier of Capitol Records and its roster of top stars like Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Dean Martin, Les Paul & Mary Ford, Ray Anthony, Stan Kenton etc. Brunswick was another Decca controlled label that brought us more American singers including Bing Crosby, Ella Fitzgerald, The Four Aces and Peggy Lee.

E.M.I. was an older and much more complicated business than Decca. It comprised a collection of labels that in the main began as separate companies. The Columbia Phonograph Co. makers of gramophones and records, was formed in Washington DC in 1888, an outpost reaching London by 1897 the same year that The

Gramophone Company, manufacturer of H.M.V records, was formed here as a subsidiary to the American Berliner company. The origins of Parlophone are from a different direction, being established in Germany in 1911, it had arrived in Britain by 1923. In 1931 Columbia, H.M.V and Parlophone along with Regal and Zonophone merged to form Electrical and Musical Industries (E.M.I), the largest recording organization in the world.

Alongside the E.M.I labels UK artists - Columbia had Victor Silvester, Eddie Calvert, Ray Martin, Ruby Murray, Josef Locke, Tony Brent etc. - H.M.V. had Donald Peers, George Melachrino, Max Bygraves, Joe Loss, Alma Cogan, Frankie Vaughan etc - Parlophone was considered the poor relation at E.M.I (that was until George Martin signed the Beatles!) and so got the less popular names like Dick James, Edna Savage, Jimmy Shand, The Goons etc. - the company still had call on its American cousin's recording output, so Columbia had the big selling names of Guy Mitchell, Frankie Laine, Jo Stafford and Rosemary Clooney while from R.C.A Victor (H.M.V over here) there was Eddie Fisher, Tony Martin, Vaughn Monroe and Perry Como.

Although most big name artists were exclusive to Decca and E.M.I, that's not to say there were not gems to be found outside the big two. A number of independent labels existed, probably the oldest being Oriole that began releasing jazz records in 1927. Around 1950 they began issuing recordings from the American Mercury label including Patti Page, Vic Damone and early Frankie Laine sides, but during the fifties they began to sign more British artists and Louis Levy's studio, that owned Oriole, also made the Embassy recordings for Woolworth.

Other independents included Tempo that appeared just after the war when ex-R.A.F man Colin Pomroy, with a dedication to jazz music, began the Tempo Record Society selling to 'collectors' by mail-order. Melodisc was another post-war label, established by Emile Shalit who served with the US forces in Europe and after the war stayed in France issuing records of American originals. He later came to London where he established Melodisc, recording unknown British artists (Dickie Valentine, Dennis Lotis and Eddie Calvert all had their first single on Melodisc). The label also became a home for British calypso. Esquire was another jazz based label, established in 1948 by percussionist Carlo Krahmer with Peter Newbrook.

The fifties saw quite a shake up in the record industry, with two new major players entering the business. Philips the Dutch electrical giant established a record division in 1950 by buying Decca in Holland and Polydor in France and issuing them in Germany under the Philips label. In 1952 they began paving their way into the UK market by capturing the US Columbia catalogue that had previously been available here on the British Columbia label. This gave them an immediate step onto the hit parade with the recordings of Johnnie Ray and Frankie Laine. Norman Newell left E.M.I to run the UK Philips operation and he soon began signing local talent with Johnny Brandon, David Hughes, Jean Carson and Gary Miller being early names to appear on the label, all benefiting, as did most of the other

UK artists on Philips, from superb backings by Wally Stott and his orchestra.

Pye, of course, was the other large electrical company that decided, in the fifties, to move into records in a big way. This they did initially by taking over the small Nixa label that had previously specialised in classical and light music. Re-branding as Pye-Nixa in September 1955 and incorporating Polygon, with Denis Wilson as musical director and Michael Barclay A & R man, it too began issuing popular artists.

Polygon, never a big player, was none the less interesting, being the brainchild of Petula Clark's father Leslie and businessman Alan Freeman (not the DJ) who between them tried to tackle the big boys at their own game. Initially not sure of their market, early Polygon releases, by Pet Clark, The Stargazers and Harold Smart were only available in Australia. Oddly Polygon's first UK release, in December 1950, was 'Oh babe' by the Louis Prima orchestra, but they soon had a hit on their hands with Jimmy Young's rendering of 'Too Young'. The only problem was they couldn't make enough of them to satisfy demand. After four uphill years in the business, Polygon's owners were no doubt more than happy to admit defeat and sell out to Pye.

Having now introduced just about all the different U.K. labels around during the forties and early fifties, it might be time to look at prices. Back in 1940 the average 10inch 78 rpm single was 3/- (*15p*), although some labels had a low-cost range - usually dance music, H.M.V's BD series was one, Parlophone's F series was another, and all of these could be had for only 2/- (*10p*). Decca used their Rex label for the same purpose and these were only 1/6 (*7½p*).

During the war prices rose quite steeply, if you could get them at all (shellac was almost impossible to obtain and many old records were being melted down for reuse) but changes in the April 1946 budget brought the price down again, with the average 10 inch now costing 4/- (*20p*) and the low-cost series 3/1 (*15½p*). The next few years saw prices creeping up again - purchase tax in 1948 increased from 50% to 66% - and in 1950 the average 10 inch E.M.I label was 4/8 (*23½p*) with the low-cost series (now in their declining years) at 3/7 (*18p*). Decca's popular F series was still only 4/- (*20p*) but their Capitol label cost 5/9 (*28½p*), same price as the current average 12 inch.

1951 saw another price increase, E.M.I. labels were now 5/4 (*27p*) with Decca at 4/8 (*23½p*). Most of the remaining low-cost series including M.G.M were 4/4 (*21½p*), while Brunswick, Capitol, London and Melodisc were all 6/- (*30p*) and Esquire were 6/6 (*32½p*). An average 12 inch was now 6/10 (*34p*).

The April 1953 budget brought purchase tax on records and musical instruments back down to 50% so prices that had been static for a couple of years eased back a little. But, then as now, prices generally tend to rise and by the end of the decade a 10 inch 78 (itself now struggling to survive) cost about 6/7 (*33p*).

As mentioned, by the late fifties the good old 78 rpm record that had been around since the beginning of the century was on its last legs. Engineers are always looking for a better way of doing things, and so it was with recording.

Wartime experiments on radar by Decca had given us their FFRR (Full Frequency Range Recording) system that improved the dynamic range of recordings. But surface noise and playing time were two obstacles still to overcome. Using plastics instead of shellac and lighter pick-ups overcame the first hurdle, but added cost and so Pye was the only British label to seriously give plastic 78's a chance. Overcoming the second hurdle was more of a problem, larger discs? - the 12 inch seemed maximum for domestic use - so it had to be a slower speed and finer grooves thus enabling the same size disc to hold more music. Simple!

American companies were offering the US public a 'long playing' record by the late forties, R.C.A began issuing 7 inch 45 rpm unbreakable records in January 1949, while those from Columbia ran at 33 and a third. As we know now the R.C.A system was adopted internationally for singles and English Decca began making them in September 1950, but only for export to the US; they didn't appear over here until a couple of years later. Manufacturers were keen to promote the new discs, while the public were either unaware of their existence or sceptical of their value. The fact that they were smaller led many to believe they couldn't be worth as much, and beside that, for many, new equipment was required to play them. E.M.I sought to reassure the public by issuing a statement in October 1951 stating that they would only be issuing discs at 78 rpm and would give six months notice of any change. In America the record companies were pushing the new format hard and as early as 1950 were offering to take back unsold 78's from dealers as part payment for 45's, while pitching the price of the new product below the old, but when E.M.I brought out 45's over here they were 6½d (2½p) more than 78's. Even as late as 1957 45's were still a novelty in Britain, many people couldn't get them and Philips and Pye still didn't offer them to the general public at all.

Even so a musical revolution was taking place and record companies began announcing the end of 78 rpm record production. E.M.I deleted almost their complete catalogue of 78's in January 1959, with the very last going in March 1962. Decca did much the same.

Joan REGAN

Joan, a tall blonde described by a fifties reviewer as "a chocolate box beauty" was born 19th January 1929 at Romford Essex into an ordinary working class family of Irish decent. Following an uneventful childhood Joan began working life in a photographic shop, 'Bennett's' in London's Oxford Street, where she had quite a flair for colouring black and white prints. A keen photographer herself, she had ideas of becoming a professional; that was until one evening, while still just a sixteen year old teenager out with friends, Joan asked bandleader Lou Preager, who was resident at the Hammersmith Palais, if she could sing with his band. Lou listened and was impressed enough to recommend her to colleague Al Feld, bandleader at Sherry's Ballroom in Brighton, who signed her up.

Joan sang with Feld for about a year, making her first broadcast and gaining experience that was to prove valuable in her later career. With the war only just over there were still many young American servicemen visiting the ballroom and in 1946, still only seventeen, she met and married U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Dick Howell and returned with him to the States. Joan settled down to be a housewife in Hollywood, where Dick ran a photographic business. They had two sons Danny and Rusty, but by the early fifties the marriage had broken down and Joan returned to England with the boys.

Taking an office job in her brother-in-law Mike's Covent Garden wholesale vegetable business, she often had to visit the bank and became friendly with the manager. Learning of her love of singing he introduced her to another of his customers, Keith Devon, a theatrical agent. At Devon's suggestion Joan made a private record, singing 'Too young' and 'I'll walk alone', that was heard by his boss Bernard Delfont who fixed up a record test with Decca.

In January 1953 Joan made her first commercial record 'Till I waltz again with you', that was released by Decca in March. Despite being a U.S. No.1 for Teresa Brewer, no version of the song made the charts over here. Joan's second disc 'I'll be thinking of you' was played by Jack Jackson on his record show three weeks in succession and then he began playing the reverse side 'Oh what a sad sad day', but sadly neither became a hit.

It was about this time that singer Lita Roza decided to leave the Ted Heath Orchestra and go solo and Ted approached Joan's agent with the idea of taking her on as replacement. Although flattered Joan turned him down because his band was constantly on tour and she feared she would hardly ever be home with her sons. She did eventually make a recording with Ted's Music, 'Sweet heartaches' in 1956.

Despite giving up the chance of being a part of one of Britain's top bands Joan didn't have too long to wait for success, only until December 1953 when her version of another Teresa Brewer success, 'Ricochet', appeared on the New Musical Express Top Ten list for one week. It was a song she hadn't been too keen on recording, but was glad she did. With its great backing from the Squadronaires, by January it was back in the charts for a further four weeks.

While noting 'Ricochet' as her first British hit, it is a surprising fact that she had already made the American charts during August with 'Till they've all gone home', released there on London Records it made a creditable No.23. The US 'Variety' showbiz paper made an accurate prediction when they said "Joan Regan should soon move into the top show-business bracket".

From June 1953 Joan made several broadcasts with Sid Phillips and his band on the 'Hi Neighbour' series, plus a spot on 'Midday Music Hall' during August. In November as well as an airing on 'Workers' Playtime', she made her first T.V. appearance singing 'Ricochet' with the Ray Martin Orchestra.

Joan's first taste of variety was in Ireland, where she had two weeks in the 'Edgar Bergen Show', that involved her taking part in comedy sketches as well as singing, definitely straight in at the

deep end. This she followed with the 1953 summer season show at Weymouth's Alexandra Theatre that starred comedian Tommy Fields (Gracie's brother) and Audrey Jeans. A Moss Empire tour then took her around Britain, joining artists like Frankie Vaughan, Jimmy Wheeler, Tommy Cooper and Harry Worth.

But it was in February 1954 when BBC producer Richard Afton chose her for a vocal spot on his new television series 'Quite Contrary' that her career really took off. So popular was Joan with viewers, he made her spot a regular feature of the show. During the series Decca issued 'Someone else's roses' and this became her second UK chart entry, reaching No.5 in June. Then, from 1st July 1954, Joan began an eight week radio series 'Once Over Lightly' that featured the Nat Temple Orchestra and during August 'Hello Young Lovers' on Radio Luxembourg with Gary Miller and Geoff Love and his Orchestra, a series sponsored by Jays' Furniture.

Joan continued to tour in variety and spent much of 1954 appearing in Harold Fielding's touring show 'Music For The Millions', ending the year as principal boy in pantomime at Lincoln's Theatre Royal. The year also gave Joan another chart success with 'If I Give My Heart to You', being the closest she ever got to the top, rising to No.3 at the end of November, just ahead of Doris Day who only made No.4. On 21st October she appeared on Jack Jackson's TV show 'Leave it to Jackson', described as "a slightly crazy show". On air Joan did several more mid-day variety programmes and from February 1955 joined Frankie Howerd as regular vocalist on his Light Programme series. Joan did a further radio series with Frankie and also appeared on his TV shows.

In 1955 for the first time there were two Royal Variety Performances, one at Blackpool during April (the first one to be held outside of London) and the traditional November London show. Joan appeared at Blackpool in a 'Radio Times' feature with Alma Cogan, The Five Smith Brothers and Geraldo's Orchestra.

During May she made a return visit to Hollywood to see old friends and discuss a possible film part. Her voice had already been heard singing the title song on the film 'Prize Of Gold', which when released on disc gave Joan her next chart entry. While in the States she appeared on the Eddie Fisher T.V. show. Immediately on her return home it was back to Blackpool for the mid-May opening of the summer season show 'Pick of the Pack' at the Queens Theatre, with Hylda Baker, Ken Platt and The Three Monarchs. During the show's run she broadcast twice on 'Blackpool Night Out'.

While she was appearing at Blackpool, Joan passed the driving test in her new Ford Zephyr car and having promised sons Danny and Rusty that they would be the first to have a ride when she'd passed, on the Sunday following her test Joan drove all the way down to London to keep her promise.

Following the summer season Joan took a short break (there were reports of a possible musical film with Frankie Laine) before doing some radio and T.V. work. Variety appearances were mostly in the London area including regular

Sunday concerts with the Jack Parnell and Ronnie Scott bands. At the end of October 1955 she was at the Trocadero, Elephant & Castle with the visiting U.S. group The Crew Cuts, riding high on their hit 'Sh-Boom' (rock and roll was on the way). November brought Joan her first appearance on the new commercial television channel, on 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium', followed in December by her own show 'Singing For You' also for ITV.

Joan's other 1955 record chart entries included a duet with her son Dusty on 'Open up Your Heart', in May. This Stuart Hamblen song had been a U.S. success for the oddly named Cowboy Church Sunday School choir. In November she was joined by the Johnston Brothers on 'Wait for Me', that was to be her last U.K. chart entry for nearly four years (blame the afore-mentioned rock and roll!) although in America her 'Croce Di Oro' (Cross of Gold) charted in November not too far behind the home grown version from Patti Page.

Panto time in 1955 found Joan as 'Dick Whittington' at the Liverpool Empire with Brian 'PC 49' Reece, Sonnie Hale and The Radio Revellers (this was the same panto and players as had been at Manchester the previous year, with Joan replacing Joy Nichols).

Highlights of 1956 included Joan's first non-TV appearance at the London Palladium, playing a short season in April with Dave King. Her own series of six Friday night television specials for the BBC began on 22nd June, and she appeared on 'The Holiday Show' with Terry-Thomas on August Bank Holiday Monday and a new Ted Heath Band TV series 'Turn On the Heath' a fortnight later.

With no big summer show that year she continued to tour, adding another short season in London during September, this time at the Prince of Wales Theatre with David Whitfield and Terry-Thomas. Joan also did much other TV and radio during 1956 and ended the year playing principal girl to Audrey Jeans' Jack, in the panto 'Jack and the Beanstalk' at Leeds Grand, with Brian Reece and Jimmy Wheeler. Baron, a much respected photographer of the day, no doubt reflected popular opinion when he included Joan on his list of the top ten beauties of 1956.

1957 was to prove quite an eventful year for Joan. In January Reg Warburton, who had done much for David Whitfield's career, joined her as musical director. In February she was involved in legal proceedings when it was announced she was to be at the London Palladium with Max Bygraves that summer (as a prelude she appeared with Max on ITV's 'Saturday Spectacular' on 9th March), when it appeared she was already contracted to star in a Blackpool show. Perhaps this was on her mind when on Tuesday 26th March her car hit a lamp post near her home in Sidcup, putting her into St. Mary's hospital there with three broken ribs and a cracked kneecap. She was in hospital two weeks, with her leg in plaster until the end of May.

Her recovery was just in time for the London Palladium opening (contract problems obviously sorted out) of 'We're having a Ball' on Friday 21st June with Max Bygraves and the singing Kaye Sisters. Joan in her solo spot looked very

delicate in an elaborate crinoline gown, but proved how robust she was in a comedy song and dance routine with Max. The pair also duetted on a Decca single singing 'Seven and a half cents' and 'Good evening friends'.

During the Palladium show's run, on Saturday 27th July 1957 at St. Lawrence Church, Sidcup, Joan married Harry Claff box office manager at the theatre. In a morning service that was supposed to be a hush-hush wedding, over 600 people turned up to see the bride, dressed in a ballerina length dress of white and pale green lace, arrive late. Her brother Bill gave her away and best man was theatrical agent Leslie Grade, while other official guests included Max Bygraves and his wife Blossom, organist Robinson Cleaver and the man who started it all, Joan's agent Keith Devon. The honeymoon lasted from after the last show that night until first house Monday.

In November Joan made her second appearance on a Royal Variety Performance, with Max and The Kaye Sisters in an excerpt from their Palladium show 'Having a Ball', which closed at the Palladium in December and moved to Manchester, with Joan's spot taken over by Yana. Joan had intended to appear in 'Cinderella' at Dudley that winter, but other events changed her plans. She was expecting a baby in April and decided to take things easy until then. This included a belated honeymoon on Gibraltar. There was also another (successful) court case against a national newspaper who had suggested the baby was due in February, less than nine months after the wedding!

Despite a lack of hits Joan's discs kept coming, some good songs that still sold well, including 'Love and marriage', 'Honestly', 'Sweet heartaches', 'Wonderful wonderful', 'Breezing along with the breeze' and many others, plus late in 1956 her first L.P. 'Just Joan'.

A daughter, Donna Alison, arrived Thursday 24th April and was christened about a month later at St. Lawrence Church, with old friend Max Bygraves as godfather. Joan and Max were together again on 25th May, appearing on ITV's 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium'. Two days earlier on the Friday Joan had reported back for work, opening for the summer season in 'Show Time' on Blackpool's North Pier with magician David Nixon, comedians Billy Dainty and Reg Varney and fellow vocalists Edmund Hockridge and The King Brothers. In the show she added dancing and impersonations to her act, plus a rock and roll session with The King Brothers.

On 9th July she appeared on radio's 'Blackpool Night' and later that month, on the 20th, was on ITV's 'Stars From the Summer Shows' with Ruby Murray and The Jones Boys. As soon as 'Show Time' ended on Saturday 4th October, it was back to London for two weeks at the Prince of Wales theatre with Dickie Valentine. Joan also had a small part in the 1958 musical film 'Hello London' that starred Michael Wilding, Eunice Gayson and ice skating star Sonja Henie.

Further TV appearances during the year included ITV's 'Saturday Spectacular' with Edmund Hockridge on 11th October, 'Music Shop' on Sunday 2nd November and 'Six Five Special' on 22nd November. The latter wasn't really Joan's

scene, but she was there to publicise her appearance in the film version of the show. She was also on Frankie Howerd's Christmas Special. The year also brought Joan her first London pantomime, 'Cinderella', at Chiswick Empire with television announcer MacDonald Hobley and Sid Millward's Nitwits.

Having no further chart success with Decca, Joan moved over to H.M.V. in 1958. Her first recording on that label, 'Love like ours', was written by Russ Conway who had once been her pianist. But it was her second H.M.V. record, 'May you always', a song that scored in the U.S. for the McGuire Sisters, which put her back on the Hit Parade. During its sixteen week run in the charts Joan's version reached No.9 position. Although The McGuire Sisters' disc had started ahead, it only managed No.15. Radio and TV during early 1959 was limited to an odd 'Midday Music Hall', the BBC's 'Festival of Dance Music' again, ITV's 'Top Numbers' and Henry Hall's Birthday Show for BBC TV on 9th May, plus a couple of Jack Jackson shows.

By March 1959 Joan was back on the road in variety with the Marino Marini Quartet. For a week in April she deputized for Shirley Bassey in the show 'Blue Magic' at the Prince of Wales theatre. Shirley was off sick with laryngitis. Joan was now making impersonations a regular feature of her act, taking off Shirley, along with Ruby Murray, Alma Cogan, Anne Shelton and Connie Francis. From the 10th May she joined Michael Holliday on a short one night stand tour of Granada theatres around central England, before packing her bags and heading for the seaside once more.

Her summer season, opening on 1st June, was in Bernard Delfont's 'Big Show of 1959' at Great Yarmouth's Wellington Pier Pavilion. It was really a re-vamp of 1958's Blackpool show with many of the same artists including David Nixon, Billy Dainty and The King Brothers. On 21st August she was on BBC TV's 'Summer Stars' and from October Joan began her own new television series 'Be My Guest', on which she introduced a different star guest each week. The show became a firm favourite with the viewing public, running on and off until 1962. After less than eighteen months with H.M.V, producing only two singles and an L.P, Joan changed to the Pye label. Despite her short time with H.M.V one recording 'May you always' became one of her favourites and she adopted it as an unofficial theme song.

'Happy anniversary' Joan's first release from Pye in November 1959, that featured some harmony singing from husband Harry, was a bit of a slow starter but by the following February it had just crept into the Top Thirty at No.29. One of the first media outings of the song was on ITV's 'Saturday Spectacular' on 28th November, a show that also featured funsters Jimmy Jewel & Ben Warriss. The same month she appeared on David Nixon's BBC TV show and was one of the stars to appear on the channel's 'Christmas Night with the Stars'. In December 1959 Joan got rather upset when the press revealed her BBC TV contract was worth £20,000.

Three further Pye singles made it into the lower regions of the charts 'Papa loves mama' (a duet with Rusty), 'One of the lucky ones' and 'Must be Santa'. The latter in December 1960 brought

Joan's chart run to an end. Having become great friends with Ted Hockridge, they were now both on the same Pye label and recorded an album 'Joan and Ted' (NPL 18048) together.

1960 began with a three week tour of service camps in Cyprus, with The Peter Crawford Trio. During the tour Joan introduced one end of a 'Forces Family Favourites' broadcast. Back home she began another series of 'Be My Guest'. Produced by Russell Turner (Barbara Lyon's husband), on the six fortnightly 45 minute shows Joan had the backing of the Cliff Adams Singers and Wally Stott and his Orchestra, with Eve Boswell the guest on the first one on 22nd March. In May she appeared on another Royal Variety Show, at the Victoria Palace, in a feature titled Tell Me Pretty Maiden with a whole line up of popular vocalists. But it was Sammy Davis's night, with him taking eight curtain calls (something not normally ever done on a Royal show). Staying in London Joan joined Edmund Hockridge, Russ Conway, Billy Dainty and a young rock & roll singer by the name of Cliff Richard in a new London Palladium revue 'Stars In Your Eyes' that opened on Friday 3rd June and ran until December.

On 16th October she was on David Nixon's 'Showtime', BBC TV's answer to 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium', and on the 25th of the month there began a further six editions of her very popular 'Be My Guest' shows. With Russ Conway she co-hosted the Light Programme's Boxing night variety show.

Joan made her West End cabaret debut when she opened on New Year's Eve for a four week season at the Talk of the Town nightspot. 1961 summer was spent at the brand new Torquay Princes Theatre with her old pal Edmund Hockridge plus Tommy Cooper and a couple of new comedians Morecambe & Wise.

Early in 1962, following another season at the Talk of the Town, Joan was off to America for cabaret appearances at New York's St. Regis Hotel. She then joined magician David Nixon, ventriloquist Terry Hall (with Lennie the lion) and singer Mark Wynter at Bournemouth's Winter Garden for the summer and played principal girl in 'Puss in Boots' at the London Palladium, with Frankie Vaughan, Jimmy Edwards, Dick Emery and Mike & Bernie Winters.

While continuing to be professionally busy, the following decades were somewhat traumatic for Joan. Her marriage ended in divorce after Harry Claff, who became joint general manager of the Palladium, was imprisoned for fraud. The shock led Joan to a breakdown, but happiness finally re-entered her life when she married Martin Cowan, a doctor, and once again settled in America.

In 1984 more bad luck came when she slipped in the shower and struck her head, leaving her paralysed with a speech impediment. It took great determination and extensive therapy just to get back to normal living and an extra effort to sing again. But she did and was still doing so during the nineties, appearing in the occasional fifties revival show. I believe Joan now lives in Orpington, Kent. She was heard being interviewed about her life on Ed Stewarts Radio 2 afternoon show on Sunday 9th April 2000.

DECCA	Joan Regan Recordings
F 10068 Mar 53	'Till I waltz again with you / Wishing ring'
F 10100 May 53	'I'll always be thinking of you / Oh what a sad sad day'
F 10127 Jun 53	'Till they've all gone home / I know for sure'
F 10156 Aug 53	'The long way / Rag-a-bone man'
F 10193 Oct 53	'Richochet / Merry-go-round and swings' (with <i>The Keynotes acc by The Squadronnaires</i>)
F 10237 Jan 54	'Red, red, red / Tani'
F 10257 Feb 54	'Someone else's roses / The love I have for you' (acc by Johnny)
<i>Douglas orch</i>	
F 10300 Apl 54	(with Dickie Valentine & The Keynotes)
	'Cleo and me-o / Pine tree pine over me'
F 10311 May 54	'Jilted / I'll travel with you' (acc by J.D orch)
F 10362 Aug 54	'Wait for me darling (with The Johnston Brothers) / Two kinds of tears' (acc by Johnny)
<i>Douglas orch</i>	
F 10373 Sep 54	'If I give my heart to you / Faded flowers' (acc by Johnny)
<i>Douglas orch</i>	
F 10397 Oct 54	'This ole house (with The Keynotes) / Can this be love'
F 10432 Jan 55	'Prize of gold / When you're in love' (acc by Johnny)
<i>Douglas orch</i>	
F 10474 Feb 55	'Open up your heart (with son Rusty) / If you learn to love each other'
F 10505 Apl 55	'Danger heartbreak ahead / Don't be afraid of love' (acc by Johnny)
<i>Douglas orch</i>	
F 10521 May 55	'Just say you love her / Nobody danced with me'
F 10598 Sep 55	'The rose and the flame / The Shepherd boy' (acc by Johnny)
<i>Douglas orch</i>	
F 10659 Dec 55	'Cross of gold (acc by J. Douglas orch) / Love and marriage (acc by Roland Shaw orch)'
F 10710 Mar 56	'Don't take me for granted / The boy with the magic guitar'
F 10742 May 56	'I'd never leave you baby (with The Johnston Brothers) / Honestly'
F 10752 Jun 56	'My September love' (part of Lord Taverner's All Star Hit Parade)
F 10757 Jly 56	'Sweet heartaches / Second fiddle' (acc by Ted)
<i>Heath Music</i>	
F 10801 Oct 56	'Gone / Make me a child again'
F 10871 Mar 57	'Nearer to me / Cross my ever loving heart'
F 10911 Jly 57	'Wonderful wonderful / Speak for

yourself

John' (*acc by Reginald*

Warburton orch)

F 10934 Sep 57 (with Max Bygraves) 'Seven and half cents /

Good

evening friends'

F 10942 Oct 57 'Love me to pieces / Soft sands'

F 11009 Apr 58 'I may never pass this way again / Breezing

along with the breeze' (*acc by Roland*

Shaw orch)

H.M.V.

POP 555 Nov 58 'Take me in your arms / Love like yours'

POP 593 Feb 59 'May you always / Have you ever been lonely'

(*acc by Frank Cordell*

orch)

PYE NIXA

N 15238 Nov 59 'Happy anniversary / So close to my heart'

N 15259 Mar 60 'If only you'd be mine / O dio mio'

N 15278 Jly 60 'Papa loves mama (*with Rusty & Donna Regan*)

/ When you know someone

loves you'

N 15303 Nov 60 'Must be Santa /

Will Santa come to

shanty town'

N 15310 Oct 60 'One of the lucky ones / My thanks to you'

N 15334 Feb 61 'It must be spring / How wonderful to know'

N 15367 Jly 61 'My foolish heart / We who are in love'

N 15400 Nov 61 'Surprising / In the arms of my love'

N 15439 Apr 62 'Most people get married /

Don't let me stand in

your way'

N 15496 Jan 63 'Golden dreams / Wandering boy'

C.B.S.

202100 66 'Don't talk to me about love / I'm no toy'

Billy REID

A prolific writer of romantic ballads, a top bandleader and variety artist but a poor manager of money, William Gordon 'Billy' Reid died in 1974 leaving little more than musical memories.

The son of a coal works manager, he was born in Southampton in September 1902, one of five children who were all encouraged to appreciate music by their father. As a lad, Billy, a self-taught piano and accordion player, earned coppers playing in working men's clubs around his home town.

Starting work as a boiler-maker in the shipyards, he soon decided music was more fun and in 1925 joined Leslie Jefferies' Band at Edinburgh's Marine Gardens, taking over as leader the following year. In 1929 he was playing accordion in the orchestra for Noel Coward's 'Bitter Sweet' at London's His Majesty's Theatre. He recorded on piano and accordion with Nat Star and Roy Fox and in 1931 joined Sydney Lipton's Orchestra who were resident at Kensington Palace Hotel.

Billy formed his popular accordion band as a studio group in 1931 and went on to make numerous recordings. He claimed he was the

first Primo Scala, a fictitious bandleader who over the years led an accordion band on scores of recordings, later ones also hiding the real identity of George Scott Wood and Harry Bidgood. Billy's accordion band soon became well known through its broadcasts on the 'Stars of Luxembourg' radio series.

Not only was Billy an able musician, he also developed a talent for song-writing, although his first published piece inspired by the Irish border problem and titled 'When the Rose of Tralee met Danny Boy', didn't go down too well with some. As with any product, success depends on the way you sell it and the arrival of 'salesgirl' Dorothy Squires in 1937 was just what Billy needed. Dot, from South Wales, was still struggling to make a name for herself when Billy heard her singing with Charlie Kunz at London's Casani Club. He liked the voice and the lady and persuaded her to join his band. It wasn't long before their relationship became as personal as it was professional, with Dorothy enchanted by this romantic man 22 years her senior.

On radio and record the duo captivated the British public with great songs from Billy's pen like 'The Gipsy', a tune he had written in the mid-thirties that became an enormous success ten years later. Not only popular at home, the song became a number one hit in the States for both The Ink Spots and Dinah Shore, spending five weeks at the top of the American charts, an unprecedented feat for a British song. It also spent several weeks on top of the best selling sheet music chart at home. The song earned Billy a small fortune.

More of his forties' successes were 'Coming home', 'I'll close my eyes', 'Anything I dream is possible', 'It's a pity to say goodnight', 'A tree in the meadow' (a million seller for Margaret Whiting), 'Reflections on the water' and 'This is my mother's day' all put on disc by Dorothy Squires. The latter song was introduced to the public on a 'Mother's Day' party at Hammersmith Palais in March 1949. A large bouquet of flowers presented to Dorothy Squires was passed on to the oldest mother there, who happened to be bandleader Lou Preager's mum Rebecca. At least 18 of Billy's songs reached the best sellers list between 1945 and 1955. Unlike some composers, Billy's songs were all his own work as he wrote both the words and the music.

By the end of the war Billy had given up bandleading and now billed as "The Composer and the Voice", toured in variety with Dorothy. The two became one of the most highly paid acts around, with Billy accompanying Dot on piano and the newly invented Solovox organ. On radio they had their own series 'Melody Lane' on which they introduced a new British song each week.

Billy opened his own music publishing company and promoted other acts in variety including The Kopper Knobs (due to the colour of their hair) an all girl vocal trio. In 1949 he bought a cinema in Llanelly, South Wales, turning it into a theatre, but through poor financial management it lost money and closed, later becoming a bingo hall. Several other ventures went the same way.

By the early Fifties relationships between the two had soured and they split up (Dorothy later went to America with Roger Moore). Billy's finances continued to suffer when she won a legal battle

over ownership of the luxury house they had shared. He attempted to re-create the stage act with a new young partner, 24 year old Janet Gordon (who I believe he later married) but they never reached the heights of the original partnership.

Billy had lost a lot but he certainly hadn't lost the ability to write a hit song. The fifties brought forth 'I'm walking behind you' (a number one hit both sides of the Atlantic for Eddie Fisher), 'The bridge of sighs' (David Whitfield's first hit recording) and 'I still believe' (a Ronnie Hilton favourite) among others. But despite the success of his songs, little other work came his way and by the end of the decade, and the advent of rock and roll, he had been made bankrupt, a state from which he never really recovered, dying sad and lonely on 12th December 1974.

One of the few people to remember him with affection was Dorothy Squires who paid tribute to his great talent in her one-woman shows. Had Billy been an American I'm sure we would still be celebrating his work today, but he wasn't and consequently is almost forgotten.

Although Billy recorded prolifically during the thirties, most of his post-war discs were those leading the orchestra backing Dorothy Squires. In 1948 he played accordion in a trio that backed The Street Singer, Arthur Tracy, on his Decca single F8878. His only other post-war recording appears to be this single Polygon disc.

POLYGON

P 1138 Oct 54 'Peppito / Cross of gold
(vocals by Janet Gordon)'

Tommy REILLY

A Canadian, Tommy Reilly's father had lost a fortune in the stock market crash and was reduced to working as a school caretaker. Tommy who had been brought up to play classical violin, discovered a natural aptitude for the mouth organ and set about perfecting his technique, forming a student harmonica band.

Moving with his parents to England in 1935, Tommy was soon touring in variety all across Europe. Still extending his musical skills on both instruments, he was a student in Leipzig when war broke out and, interred by the Germans, spent several years in concentration camps.

After the war Tommy returned to Britain and the variety stage, where billed as "The Harmonica Virtuoso", he began building himself a busy career on stage, radio and recording studio that took him well into the eighties.

He first recorded here on the Parlophone label in 1951 and over the years his output encompassed jazz, pop and the classics, with many numbers being his own compositions.

Tommy was awarded an MBE in 1992 for his services to music. He celebrated his 81st birthday on 21st August 2000, but sadly died just a month later.

Tommy Reilly Recordings PARLOPHONE

R 3354 Jan 51 'Medley (with Vic Hammett Quartet) : I

didn't

be the next

bobbidi-boo /

heartless /

Autumn leaves'

R 3364 Mar 51 'El Cubanchero (with Vic Hammett Quartet) /

Midnight in Mayfair (with Vic Hammett piano)'

R 3389 May 51 'The Saturday waltz / Capricious'

R 3415 Aug 51 'Cuban holiday / Teddy bear's picnic'

R 3444 Oct 51 'Ciribiribin on the mandolin / So deep my love'

R 3458 Nov 51 'Jealousy / Laura
(both with Vic

Hammett Quartet)'

R 3524 May 52 'That old black magic / Dinah'

R 3560 Aug 52 'The toy trumpet / Martinique
(both with Vic

Hammett Quartet)'

R 3598 Nov 52 'Bop! goes the weasel' (on one side only)

R 3645 Mar 53 'Lazy cowboy / The limping man theme'

R 3693 Jun 53 'The Night of the Forth theme / Strictly

personal'

R 3860 May 54 'Family joke / High horse'

R 3924 Nov 54 'The high and the mighty / Rip Van Twinkle'

ORIOLE

CB 1316 Jan 56 (with The Maple Leaf Four) 'Paris by night

(Riffi) / It's so

impossible'

CB 1329 Jun 56 'The intimate stranger' (on one side only)

CB 1426 Mar 58 (with Jack Warner) An ordinary copper /

On

the way up'

CB 1640 Nov 61 (with Jack Warner) 'Dixon of Dock Green'

CB 1833 May 63 (& The Tradesmen) 'Dakota / S.O.S.'

FONTANA

H 104 Jan 58 'Barnacle Bill's hornpipe / Count five and die'

(acc by Johnny

Gregory Orch)

PHILIPS

PB 1094 Dec 60 'Theme from The Sundowners / Down under'

326543 62 'Blow man blow / No dice'

BF 1248 62 'So little time / Moon fire'

Don RENNIE

While at school in Aldgate, London, Don used to sing and when he left aged 14 was already a regular vocalist with local amateur dance bands. Whenever there was a talent contest Don would enter and in 1944 came second in a national 'Search for a Sinatra' event.

In 1946 National Service took him into the R.A.F where he had little opportunity to sing, but on his demob in July 1948 decided to make it a full time job. Over the next few years he was a member of the chorus of several London shows including 'Bitter Sweet', 'High Button Shoes', 'Annie Get

Your Gun' and 'Bless the Bride'.

Noticed by BBC producer Ernest Maxim, who featured him on TV's 'Showcase', this in turn led to a regular spot on comedian Dave King's first television series in 1954. He broadcast on several BBC Show Band shows. A contract with Parlophone Records followed, with his first disc 'To please my lady' backed with 'When you lose the one you love' out in November 1955.

Don toured in variety but, despite a pleasant voice and relaxed style, he was continually under-rated and never seemed able to rise above 3rd-4th billing. Success almost came his way when CBS talent scout Sol Newman said he would like to promote Don in America, commenting "he has the talent, stage-craft, sincerity and also that starved look that will go down well with American audiences".

Unfortunately before his trans-Atlantic life took off Don was put in hospital, when a car he was working under fell on him. He needed plastic surgery on his nose before getting back at work early in 1958. He did several concerts with pianist Winifred Atwell and had a number of bookings on the Continent. On Monday 10th March he had what was now a rare broadcast date on 'Midday Music Hall'.

Later in the year 27 year old Don changed his style from ballad to beat and made over fifteen appearances on 'Six Five Special'. Back touring in variety, reports of his act were favourable and although never a big star Don continued to be busy playing summer seasons and clubs.

Don Rennie Recordings PARLOPHONE

R 4085 Nov 55 'To please my lady /
When you lose the one
you love'
R 4141 Feb 56 'To love, to love is wonderful / One girl
-
one boy' (*acc by Reg*

Owen orch)
R 4172 May 56 'Can you find it in your heart / Who
are we'
R 4249 Dec 56 'Ev'rybody falls in love with someone /
This is only the beginning'

(*with Ron*
orch) EMBER

EMB 121 Jan 61 'Love can change so many things /
Where the hot
wind blows'
EMB 149 Mar 62 'No speak English / Till the end of
time'

Monte REY

By the early fifties Monte Rey had virtually given up performing, preferring to spend time on his farm at Galleywood near Chelmsford, Essex.

An operatic trained singer, James Montgomery Fyfe (his real name) a Scot from Glasgow, had intended to follow a classical path but a sudden illness that robbed him of his debut performance in 'Madam Butterfly' at the Monte Carlo Opera House changed all that.

Returning to Britain, he heard that a Spanish tenor was wanted for a series of broadcasts entitled 'Chateau de Madrid' featuring Geraldo and his Tango Orchestra. Changing his name to

Monte Rey he auditioned for and got the job. Monte was so popular with listeners that Geraldo offered him a contract for further broadcasts and stage work.

During the mid-thirties he provided the vocal on several of Geraldo's recordings and also did some studio work for Phil Green and Joe Loss. In 1938 Monte became one of the regular vocalists with the Joe Loss Band and remained so until the early years of the war when he left to freelance.

A popular performer in variety and on radio during the forties and into the fifties, an appearance on TV's 'Quite Contrary' in 1955 gave him a career boost when he had just about faded from view.

Monte passed away 4th August 1982, aged 81.

Monte Rey Recordings from 1940

PARLOPHONE

F 1645 40 'So deep is the night / Absent friends'
F 1685 40 'Donkey serenade / O sole mio'
F 1710 40 'Kiss me again / Oh mamma mia'
F 1734 40 'Poinchello / Serenade of Napoli'

H.M.V.
medleys (*both these discs were Joe Loss
recorded at the Edinburgh Empire
in November 1940*)
Theatre

BD 5638 Jan 41 'Punchinello'
BD 5639 Jan 41 'Donkey serenade'

COLUMBIA

FB 2458 Jly 40 'When our dreams grow old / Danny
Boy'
FB 2485 'Rose of Tralee / Smilin' through'
FB 2508 'Memories live longer than dreams /
Memory of a

rose'
FB 2533 'Annie Laurie / The herding song'
FB 2562 'Come back to Sorrento / I surrender
dear'
FB 2583 Mar 41 'Love's last word is spoken /
My heart was

sleeping'
FB 2603 May 41 'To-night (Perfidia) / Frenesi'
FB 2615 Jun 41 'My song goes round the world /
The world is waiting for the

sunrise'
FB 2653 Aug 41 'They met in Rio / Boa notte'
FB 2661 Sep 41 'I'll see you again / The things I love'
FB 2707 Nov 41 'Starlight serenade / You're mine'
FB 2726 Dec 41 'Russian rose / We both told a lie'
FB 2738 Jan 42 'Intermezzo (from film Escape to
Happiness) /
Come back

my love'
FB 2769 Mar 42 'So suddenly (I found love) / Green
eyes'
FB 2782 Apl 42 'If you were beside me / Your hand in
mine'
FB 2796 Jun 42 (with Don Felipe Cuban Music) 'In Old
Mexico
/ Who'll buy a rose from

Margareeta'
FB 2842 Sep 42 'Always in my heart / One more kiss'
FB 2869 Nov 42 'Only you / Love is a song'
FB 2881 Jan 43 'My serenade / Romanesca'
FB 2902 Mar 43 'Song of the rose / Juanita'
FB 2915 Apl 43 'There are such things / Darling'
FB 2940 Jly 43 'Let us live for tonight / Really and
truly'
FB 2963 Nov 43 'O lonely moon / Star of love'
(*acc by Phil
Green Orch*)

FB 2981 Dec 43 'With all my heart / Hasta manana'
 FB 2990 Feb 44 'Serenade to a dream / Kiss me
 (Besame mucho)' (*acc by Al
 Kendall Orch*)
 FB 3006 Apl 44 'Don't ask me why / No other love'
 FB 3022 Jun 44 'Amor, amor / Poinciana' (*acc
 A.Kendall Orch*)
 FB 3043 Sep 44 'You belong to my heart / The echo of
 a serenade' (*acc by Al
 Kendall Orch*)
 FB 3047 Nov 44 'Let me love you tonight / I'm so in
 love'
 FB 3083 Feb 45 'A kiss in the night / Give me the
 stars'
 FB 3113 Jun 45 'Waiting in the rain / Rosanna'
 (*acc by Eddie
 Griffiths Orch*)
 FB 3119 Jly 45 'Pablo the dreamer / Dreamer,
 dreamer'
 FB 3142 Oct 45 'One day when we were young /
 Play gypsy, play'
 (*acc by EGO*)
 FB 3162 Dec 45 'Stars in your eyes / Out of the night'
 (*acc by Eddie
 Griffiths Orch*)
 FB 3170 Jan 46 'Manana (Tomorrow) / Maria mia' (*acc
 EGO*)
 FB 3195 Apl 46 'Rancho serenade / Forever mine'
 (*acc by Eddie
 Griffiths Orch*)
 FB 3221 Jly 46 'A voice in the night / Carmelita (*acc
 by EGO*)'
 FB 3252 Nov 46 'Granada / Magical moonlight' (*acc by
 EGO*)
 FB 3277 Jan 47 'Three beautiful words of love /
 Sweetheart, we'll
 never grow old'
 FB 3302 Jun 47 'The stars will remember / Tell me
 Marianne'
 (*acc by Eddie
 Griffiths Orch*)
 FB 3321 Aug 47 'Down the old Spanish trail / Mia
 canzon
 d'amore' (*acc by Phil
 Green Orch*)
 FB 3336 Oct 47 'Torna a surriento / Santa Lucia' (*acc
 by PGO*)
 FB 3356 Dec 47 'My first love, my last love for always /
 My lovely world and you'
 (*acc by PGO*)
 DB 2374 Feb 48 'A tree in the meadow / It began with
 a tango'
 DB 2391 Apl 48 'Bella bella mania / This is the night'
 DB 2413 Jun 48 'Lady of Spain / Donkey serenade'
 DB 2432 Aug 48 'When you're in love / Be mine'
 DB 2477 Dec 48 'When love has passed you by /
 Somewhere
 beyond the stars'
 DB 2500 Mar 49 'You belong to someone else / Mia
 mantilla'
 DB 2520 May 49 'Perhaps, perhaps, perhaps / Another
 day'
 DB 2552 Jly 49 'Beware of April rain / No, no and no'
 DB 2570 Sep 49 'Love song of Renaldo / Song of Capri'
 DB 2601 Nov 49 'Oh! tell me gypsy / Wonderful
 illusion'
 DB 2650 Mar 50 'When the heather gleams like stardust
 /
 Why is it'
 DB 2686 May 50 'The rose I bring you / Marta'
 DB 2723 Sep 50 'Have I told you lately that I love you /
 Yes, I'll
 be there'
 DB 2762 Nov 50 'Love like ours / There's no tomorrow'

Paul RICH

In 1941 guitar playing vocalist Paul Rich began his long association with the Lou Preager band at London's Hammersmith Palais, becoming Lou's longest serving singer staying with the band over thirteen years.

Born 20th August 1921 into a musical Russian immigrant family, he studied guitar under Ivor Mairants and went on to play in the bands of Harry Leader, Eddie Carroll, Ronnie Munro and Oscar Rabin before finally joining Lou Preager. By now he was just as likely to be singing as playing guitar and provided the vocal on many of the Lou's recordings.

Often, after all the dancers at the Palais had gone home, Paul would head back into town to perform his guitar-vocal solo act in West End nightspots. He also appeared in a couple of films. In the 1950 thriller 'Pool of London', for which the Preager band supplied the music, Paul was in a pub scene, and in 'Counter Spy' a few years later, he sang a specially written song (by Eric Spear) 'Slightly mad in Mexico' in a music hall scene, accompanying himself on guitar.

Paul left the Preager band in 1955, not that he'd had a better offer (although he'd probably had quite a few over the years) but because he needed more time to run his private business venture. Paul had built up a small chain of sweet and tobacco shops and he felt the time had come to give them his full attention. Although within a year he was back performing his solo act around London's clubs and coffee bars and even formed a group The Fortune Airs. Back on record too, in May 1957 he began a long association with Woolworth's Embassy label, becoming one of their most popular artists staying with them until the label folded in 1965, recording over sixty singles and several E.P's.

By the sixties Paul had moved into music publishing, joining Franklyn Boyd, Al Leslie and Cyril Baker in running a string of companies from an office in Saville Row. He later became vice-president of Elvis Presley's music publisher Carlin Music. After several decades in the music publishing business Paul ended up running the Music Publishers Association.

Although I didn't see the report myself, John Hollyman of Cardiff informs me that Paul died 23rd February 2000, aged 78.

Paul Rich Recordings

REGAL ZONOPHONE (*with Lou Preager Orch*)

MR 3737	44	'The quack quack song (with Edna Kaye)'
MR 3744	44	'I've got a heart filled with love for you dear (<i>with Edna Kaye</i>)'
MR 3747	44	'You're in love'
MR 3749	44	'No one else will do'
MR 3751	45	'Who said dreams don't come true?'

PARLOPHONE (*plays guitar in pianist Billy Penrose*)

Quartet)

R 2968	Apl 45	'Boogie in the groove / Lazy boogie'
R 2979	Aug 45	'Boogie in black and white / Billy's boogie'

COLUMBIA (with Lou Preager Orch)

FB 3115 Jun 45 'Waiting in sweetheart valley'
 FB 3123 Jly 45 'The cokey cokey'
 FB 3124 Jly 45 'I'm beginning to see the night /
 Coming home'
 FB 3156 Nov 45 'I'll always be in love with you'
 FB 3157 Nov 45 'I'd rather be me'
 FB 3167 Dec 45 'I hope to die (if I told a lie) / Lonely
 footsteps'
 FB 3168 Dec 45 'I'll close my eyes / Let's keep it that
 way'
 FB 3178 Jan 46 'Two can dream as cheaply as one /
 Carolina'
 FB 3180 Jan 46 'Cruising down the river'
 FB 3183 Feb 46 'My heart is dancing with you / Nancy'
 FB 3199 Apl 46 'Ashby de la Zouch (Castle Abbey) /
 Good, good, good (with Rita
 Williams)'
 FB 3200 Apl 46 'I'll buy that dream'
 FB 3207 May 47 'I don't know'
 FB 3216 Jun 46 'I'd like to get you alone'
 FB 3229 Aug 46 'Don't be a baby, baby'
 FB 3238 Aug 46 'The wonder of you'
 FB 3250 Oct 46 'Some day you'll want me to want you'
 FB 3260 Nov 46 'Too many irons in the fire'
 FB 3264 Dec 46 'Boomps-a-Daisy'
 FB 3273 Jan 47 'The old lamp lighter'
 FB 3282 Feb 47 'Three beautiful words of love'
 FB 3288 Mar 47 'I keep forgetting to remember'
 FB 3293 Apl 47 'Hi-jig-a-jig (follow the band)'
 FB 3297 May 47 'May I call you sweetheart'
 FB 3303 Jun 47 'The little old mill'
 FB 3304 Jun 47 'You went away and left me / Oh
 Maria'
 FB 3317 Jly 47 'I'm gonna lasso a dream'
 FB 3323 Aug 47 'Heartaches'
 FB 3330 Sep 47 'I get up ev'ry morning'
 FB 3331 Sep 47 'Apple blossom wedding'
 FB 3339 Oct 47 'Bow bells'
 FB 3340 Oct 47 'Temptation'
 FB 3352 Nov 47 'My first love, my last love for always'
 FB 3355 Dec 47 'A garden in the rain'
 FB 3368 Jan 48 'And Mimi'
 FB 3367 Jan 48 'Bella bella Marie'
 FB 3383 Mar 48 'How soon (will I be seeing you)'
 FB 3403 Jun 48 'Oh! my achin' heart'
 FB 3408 Jly 48 'After all'
 FB 3413 Aug 48 'Rambling rose / Dance ballerina
 dance'
 FB 3422 Sep 48 'Toolie oolie doolie'
 FB 3426 Oct 48 'Ballin' the jack (with The Sunnysiders)
 /
 Far away
 islands'
 FB 3444 Dec 48 'You belong to someone else /
 There's nothing to do in
 Sleepville'
 FB 3451 Jan 49 'In my dreams'
 FB 3452 Jan 49 'I'd love to live in Loveland'
 FB 3460 Feb 49 'Bouquet of roses'
 FB 3461 Feb 49 'Until'
 FB 3470 Mar 49 'I'd give the world'
 FB 3487 May 49 'Lillette'
 FB 3496 Jun 49 'Ain't it nice'
 FB 3506 Jly 49 'The wedding of Lilli Marlene /
 Carnival time'
 FB 3510 Aug 49 'The merry-go-round waltz / Devon'
 FB 3517 Aug 49 'Love song of Renaldo (with The Sun
 Spots) /
 My
 golden baby'
 FB 3524 Oct 49 'Song of Capri'
 FB 3542 Feb 50 'Long, long ago'
 FB 3565 Jly 50 'Two on a tandem / The night the floor
 fell in'
 DB 2931 Oct 51 'Longing for you'

POLYGON (with Lou Preager orch)

P 1108 Mar 54 'I'll follow you'
 EMBASSY (on only on one side of some discs)
 WB 239 May 57 'Look homeward, angel / Party doll'
 WB 244 Jun 57 'A white sports coat (and a pink
 carnation) /
 Fabulous' (acc by Ken
 Jones orch)
 WB 266 Dec 57 'My special angel / Silhouettes'
 WB 270 Jan 58 'Peggy Sue / Oh boy' (Johnny Gregory
 orch)
 WB 272 Jan 58 'At the hop / Bye bye baby' (acc K.
 Jones orch)
 WB 274 Feb 58 'You are my destiny / The stroll' (acc
 K.J orch)
 WB 281 Apl 58 'Whole lotta woman / Lah dee dah'
 WB 283 Apl 58 'Lollipop / Maybe baby'
 WB 287 Jun 58 'All I have to do is dream / Witch
 doctor'
 WB 288 Jun 58 'Purple people eater / The book of
 love'
 WB 293 Aug 58 'The only man on the island / Yakety
 yak'
 (acc by Bernard
 Ebbinghouse orch)
 WB 295 Aug 58 'On the street where you live / A
 certain smile'
 (acc by Ken
 Jones orch)
 WB 297 Aug 58 'Endless sleep / Hard headed woman'
 WB 301 Sep 58 'Poor little fool / Bird dog'
 WB 307 Oct 58 'My true love / Forget-me-not'
 WB 322 Feb 59 'Smoke gets in your eyes / Problems'
 WB 327 Feb 59 'Does your chewing gum lose it's
 flavour (on
 the bedpost over night) /
 Stagger Lee'
 WB 330 Mar 59 'Venus / Wonderful secret of love'
 WB 337 May 59 'I've waited so long / I go ape'
 WB 342 Jun 59 'Take a message to Mary / Along
 came Jones'
 WB 345 Jly 59 'Battle of New Orleans'
 WB 346 Jly 59 'A big hunk of love / Poor Jenny'
 WB 353 Sep 59 'I'm gonna get married / Mona Lisa'
 WB 355 Sep 59 '(Till) I kissed you'
 WB 363 Nov 59 'Makin' love'
 WB 368 Nov 59 'Poison ivy / Marina'
 WB 374 Jan 60 'Heartaches by the number'
 WB 378 Feb 60 'Little white bull / Harbour lights'
 WB 387 Apl 60 'My old man's a dustman /
 Fings ain't wot they
 used to be'
 WB 395 Apl 60 'Standing on the corner'
 WB 396 May 60 'Green fields'
 WB 403 Jly 60 'Itsy bitsy teeny weeny Yellow polkadot
 bikini /
 What a mouth'
 WB 411 Aug 60 'Tell Laura I love her / Lorelei'
 WB 421 Nov 60 'Mr. Custer'
 WB 426 'Dec60 'Must be Santa / Virgin Mary'
 WB 448 Apl 61 'A hundred pounds of clay'
 WB 457 Jun 61 'Well I ask you / Running scared'
 WB 479 Nov 61 'Hit the road Jack / Tower of strength'
 WB 483 Nov 61 'Give us a kiss for Christmas'
 WB 484 Nov 61 'The twist / Runaround Sue'
 WB 494 Jan 62 'Rock-a-hula baby / Walk on by'
 WB 499 Feb 62 'The hole in the ground /
 Twistin' the
 night away'
 WB 512 Jun 62 'I can't stop loving you /
 A little love, a
 little kiss'
 WB 516 Jly 62 'Right, said Fred / Our favourite
 melodies'
 WB 518 Aug 62 'Roses are red'
 WB 520 Aug 62 'Dancin' party / Gotta see baby
 tonight'

WB 523 Sep 62 'You don't know me'
 WB 526 Sep 62 'Sheila / Reminiscing'
 WB 531 Oct 62 'Devil woman / The Swiss maid'
 WB 535 Nov 62 'If only tomorrow (could be like today) /

Sun arise'

WB 537 Nov 62 'Gossip calypso'
 WB 544 Dec 62 'Your cheatin' heart'
 WB 548 Jan 63 'Little town flirt / Don't you think it's time'
 WB 567 May 63 'Young lovers (with Kay Barry)'
 WB 600 Oct 63 'Fools rush in / Memphis Tennessee'
 WB 623 Mar 64 'That girl belongs to yesterday'
 WB 627 Apr 64 'I believe' (acc by Gerry Glenn orch)
 WB 637 May 64 'No particular place to go (with The Beatmen)'
 WB 638 Jun 64 'Ramona'
 WB 651 Aug 64 'I wouldn't trade you for the world'
 WB 670 Dec 64 'No arms can ever hold you'
 WB 678 Jan 65 'Keep searchin''
 WT 2010 Jun 65 (new '4 on 1' single) 'Marie' (one track only)

Cliff RICHARD

Harry Roger Webb was born at Lucknow in India on 14th October 1940. Of course we now know him as Cliff Richard and I learn from William Hooper, editor of 'Constantly Cliff' magazine, that by the close of the 20th century Cliff had achieved 63 Top Ten hits, more than any other artist (and that includes Elvis and Madonna), including thirteen No.1's, ten No.2's, seven No.3's and six No.4's.

Beginning in the late fifties as just another rock and roll singer among the many, success was far from certain. Norrie Paramor went against the advice of many of his colleagues at Columbia when he gave Cliff his first record session and star-maker Jack Good said of him "he's got nothing like the polish and punch of Marty Wilde - whether he will make the grade remains to be seen". But make the grade he certainly did and has continued to do so over four decades.

Cliff came to Britain to stay with his grandparents when he was eight (his father worked for a wine company and travelled a lot). He later settled with his parents at Cheshunt, north of London and it was while attending Cheshunt Secondary School he learned to play guitar and formed his own rock/skiffle group with Ken Payne on guitar and Terry Smart on drums. As 'The Drifters' they played at local youth club dances. Not only interested in pop music, Cliff was also a keen footballer playing in Hertfordshire Junior League and was the school javelin champion.

By 1958 Cliff had left school and was working as an office clerk at Ferguson's Radio factory in Enfield, Middlesex. The Drifters, who had heard about the Two I's coffee bar and the success that appearing there brought others, got a two week booking but nothing came from it, although they did meet and recruit a new lead guitarist in Ian 'Sammy' Samwell. He suggested that it would help them to be remembered if their lead singer was named and deciding Harry Webb wouldn't do they eventually came up with Cliff Richards, but Samwell thought if they left off the 's' it would be more distinctive.

Cliff Richard and The Drifters began appearing Saturday mornings in a 'teenage' show at local Gaumont cinemas and it was there that agent

George Ganjou saw them. He suggested they make a private recording, so they did 'Lawdy Miss Clawdy' and 'Breathless' that were sent to Norrie Paramor at Columbia Records. Norrie, who at the time had no rock and rollers on his books, decided to let them record 'Schoolboy crush' a new song he had. As he had nothing suitable for the 'B' side he agreed to use 'Move it' a beat number written by the group's guitarist Ian Samwell. The disc, a strong vocal for Cliff with The Drifters backing padded out by session men, was released in August 1958.

The Drifters had also approached Butlin's and secured a four week booking at Clacton-on-Sea holiday camp in July 1958. The trio of Cliff, Ian Samwell and Terry Smart appearing as bar room entertainers seemed somewhat less than professional; they had no stage clothes, so were loaned Red Coat sport shirts and their repertoire was so limited they had to repeat songs during the session.

Publisher of 'Schoolboy crush' was Aberbach Music where the manager was ex-singer Franklyn Boyd. He offered to help them and approached Dennis Main Wilson, the producer of 'Six Five Special', with a view to getting them (and his company's song) on air, but the show was fully booked for six weeks, so he then asked Jack Good who agreed to squeeze Cliff and the group on to an ITV 'Oh Boy' show on 13th September.

Good listened to the disc and preferred 'Move it' the flip side, so that was the number the viewers saw and heard Cliff perform. And so great was the public reaction, Cliff and The Drifters were back on the show again the following week with two numbers. Trouble was, Marty Wilde was star of 'Oh Boy' and his manager protested and eventually withdrew Marty from the show.

This left the field clear for Cliff to take over, which he did becoming almost overnight the star of a top TV pop show. Franklyn Boyd continued to manage the group, building Cliff up from a rather shy character into more of a mover. "Too much so", cried some who accused his on-stage gyrations of being too sexy, although all the screaming girl fans seemed to approve.

At the end of October 'Move it' was joint No.2 on the New Musical Express chart (sharing the position with 'Come prima' by The Marino Marini Quartet - just below Connie Francis and her double No.1 hit Stupid Cupid / Carolina moon'). About the same time Cliff's second disc had arrived, two more songs from Ian Samwell, with 'High class baby' proving to be another success reaching No.7 position just before Christmas.

Cliff and The Drifters now set off on a major rock package tour headed by the American Kalin Twins, who'd recently had a No.1 hit with 'When'. It was at this point that Cliff's school chums gave way to a more permanent backing group (Ian Samwell wanted to concentrate on his songwriting anyway) and it was to the good old Two I's coffee bar that Cliff and Franklyn Boyd looked for replacements. These were of course Hank Marvin, Bruce Welsh, Tony Meehan and Jet Harris and, still using the name The Drifters, they joined Cliff on the Kalin Twins tour.

The first concert was at Hanley Victoria Hall on 5th October 1958, followed by a show each night that took them to Blackpool, Wigan, Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Newcastle,

Birmingham, York and Bristol.

Another one night stand tour followed, but this time Cliff, with his soaring record sales, was now top of the bill. On Monday 17th November he made his first London appearance since becoming a star attraction, beginning a week in variety with The Drifters at the Metropolitan Theatre in Edgware Road, followed by further weeks at the Chiswick and Finsbury Park Empires.

Late in 1958 Eros Films were making a movie drama highlighting the problems of juvenile delinquency, for which Lionel Bart had written a couple of songs. He suggested they get Cliff to sing them, which they did giving him a small part as a young lad on probation. Released in May 1959 as 'Serious Charge', with an 'X' rating, the film featured two songs by Cliff, 'Living doll' and 'No turning back'. He isn't actually seen singing in the film, but his voice is heard coming from a juke-box. Columbia also issued a 'Serious Charge' E.P (SEG7895) that had 'Living doll', 'No turning back', 'Mad about you', and 'Chincilla'.

'Living doll' heralded a new direction in Cliff's career, away from total rock numbers like 'Livin' lovin' doll', 'Mean streak' and 'Never mind' which continuing the big beat sound had all reached the Top Twenty. 'Living doll' was a melodic ballad, and a song Cliff said he initially loathed, but it became his first number one, spent 21 weeks (six at No.1) on the chart and sold over a million discs. The recording also reached a creditable No.30 in the American charts.

Cliff and The Drifters, now being managed by The Tito Burns Agency, began 1959 in a short package tour with Wee Willie Harris followed by a week at the Hammersmith Commodore in the 'Oh Boy Stage Show' with Vince Taylor, The Dallas Boys, The Vernon Girls, Lord Rockingham's XI and organist Cherry Wainer. Cliff was no longer appearing on 'Oh Boy' every week. This was deliberate, so as viewers would not tire of him. That didn't stop him appearing on Jack Jackson's show on Wednesday 4th March.

During February he was off on another one-night-stand package tour with Johnny Duncan and his Blue Grass Boys. The same month he made his first L.P 'Cliff' (33SX1147), a collection of rocking numbers recorded before a live audience of several hundred fans at E.M.I's St. John's Wood studio.

In March The Grade Organisation signed Cliff for a 26 week variety tour that began on Monday 30th March at Coventry Theatre with The Tanner Sisters, The Dallas Boys comedian Joe Black and as compere, comedian Des O'Connor. When the show arrived in London, at the Chiswick Empire, at the end of April, reviewer Peter Jones wrote in Record Mirror "I've a feeling that Mr. Richard will still be around when most of the current crop of rockers have vanished" - how right he was - but he did also add that the best act on the bill were The Dallas Boys! Cliff made his West End debut on a Sunday concert at the Odeon Cinema, Tottenham Court Road on 3rd May. The press reported his fan club membership now stood at 2,000.

On 23rd June he appeared on his first Royal Variety Performance, at Manchester Palace Theatre in an 'Oh Boy' feature with Marty Wilde, The Vernon Girls and Lord Rockingham's XI.

Despite 'Living doll' being his current hit, he didn't sing it on the show - neither did Marty sing his 'Teenager in love'. With Cliff's image now being targeted towards the whole family audience, on Saturday 15th August he was one of the stars, and a great hit, on one of ITV's top variety shows 'Starlight Hour', sharing top of the bill honours with American blonde bombshell Jayne Mansfield.

In September Cliff's backing group The Drifters changed their name to The Shadows so as not to be confused with the original Drifters, an American coloured vocal group. Formed in 1953 by Clyde McPhatter they were still performing (with a different line-up) in 1959.

November 1959 saw the premiere of Cliff's second film 'Expresso Bongo'. In it he plays rock singer Bongo Herbert (played by James Kenny in Wolf Mankowitz's original stage version) who is discovered by a down-and-out agent (Lawrence Harvey) and exploited. Intended to show up the seedy side of pop music, it is quite an entertaining and humorous film and Cliff sings several songs including 'A voice in the wilderness' and 'The shrine on the second floor', that were issued on an E.P of the film.

November also saw another L.P 'Cliff Sings' and on television's 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium' on 2nd of the month Bruce Forsyth presented Cliff with a gold disc for sales of 'Living doll' - Cliff was topping the bill on the show which also included The Beverley Sisters. E.M.I also gave him a gold pen and pencil set to mark the occasion.

1959 closed with Cliff and the lads appearing as the sheriff's troubadours in the pantomime 'Babes in the Wood' at Stockton Hippodrome with Marian Miller as Maid Marion and John Corcoran as Robin Hood. In a show that took full advantage of his popularity, Cliff sang 'Living doll', 'Travellin' light', 'My blue heaven' and 'Mona Lisa'.

Taking 40% of readers votes (Frankie Vaughan came second with just 7%) Cliff was voted New Musical Express "top UK male vocalist of 1959", a position he repeated year after year. On Radio Luxembourg he beat Elvis Presley into second place as "King of Rock and Roll" in a vote by listeners to 'Swoon Club'. 'Living doll' was voted "top UK vocal record of the year" by Melody Maker readers, who put it well ahead of 'Only sixteen' by Craig Douglas that came second.

As soon as the panto season was over Cliff was off to America to appear on the Perry Como and Pat Boone's TV shows followed by a month touring the States with Frankie Avalon and Duane Eddy. Playing two shows a day and covering 14 towns in the first 14 days, it was no holiday trip. Before leaving Britain he had topped another 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium' on 17th January 1960, and flew back for another on 21st February, returning to America on the Monday. Back home again he was on 'Saturday Spectacular' on 19th March.

From early April Cliff was off on another one-night-stand tour, playing two concerts on Easter Sunday at the Blackpool Opera House and with the "House Full" signs out several eager fans had to be removed from the roof. On the 16th May 1960 he was at the Victoria Palace theatre appearing on his second Royal Show in a 'Focus

on Youth' feature with Lonnie Donegan, Adam Faith, The Vernon Girls and The John Barry Seven. Friday 3rd June 1960 was opening night of the London Palladium's summer show 'Stars In Your Eyes' and Cliff was there starring alongside Russ Conway, Joan Regan and Edmund Hockridge. A most spectacular and successful show, it ran until 10th December, after which Cliff took a well earned holiday in Spain.

During the run of 'Stars In Your Eyes' Cliff made his fourth appearance on 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium' (the top TV variety show of the fifties and sixties) on 16th October and joined Emile Ford on a 'Saturday Spectacular' on 19th November. He was the castaway on radio's 'Desert Island Discs' on Monday 31st October and Steve Race interviewed him for the Home Service 'Frankly Speaking' on 20th November.

From September his photo and endorsement was appearing on the Fidelity Radio Company's advertisements for their Argyle tape recorder on sale at 22 gns. and Ayr radio at 16½ gns. Cliff's autobiography 'It's Great To Be Young' was on sale for 12/6 (62½p,) the original print run of 7,500 reportedly being sold out in three days and, should you have wished, you could have purchased a pillowcase with his photo on for just 5/11 (30p) plus 6d postage.

On Monday 17th October E.M.I held a surprise party at their West End headquarters to celebrate Cliff's 20th birthday and promote his new Columbia L.P 'Me and My Shadows' (33SX1261), a collection of beat numbers and ballads proving Cliff could really sing. Since 'Living doll' both 'Travelin' light' (his first disc with a backing labelled as The Shadows) and 'Please don't tease' had become number ones, the latter entering right up at No.7 and just zooming to the top where it stayed for four weeks.

Other Top Ten successes were 'A voice in the wilderness', 'Fall in love with you' and 'Nine times out of ten', that all made it to number two, plus 'Dynamite' and 'I love you', Cliff's last hit of 1960 that reached No.3 in Christmas week (it made No.2 in January). [*positions are from NME - other charts may vary*]

1961 was not such a productive year for Cliff chartwise, 'Theme for a dream' made No.2 in March and the following month 'Gee whiz it's you' made an unexpected No.6. Another 'Sammy' Samwell song it was a track from the L.P 'Me and My Shadows' that had only been released as a single overseas, but when fans at home learned of this, demand prompted EMI to release it over here too. Cliff's other 1961 hits were the Jerry Lordan number 'A girl like you' ("the first record I've really been happy about" he said) and 'When the girl in your arms' that reached No.4 and No.2 respectively.

Early 1961 Cliff and The Shadows made a tremendously successful tour of South Africa and their return coincided with another new L.P 'Listen to Cliff' (33SX1320), with the title saying it all. On half of the songs The Shadows gave way to a fully orchestrated backing (four conducted by Norrie Paramor and four by Bernard Ebbinghouse), allowing him to explore the whole range of his vocal talent.

To emphasise his broader appeal he again dispensed with The Shadows for the opening song on his summer show appearance at

Blackpool Opera House, where from 28th August he replaced Shirley Bassey as top-of-the-bill for the remainder of the season. Singing his opening number 'We kiss in the shadow', instrumental backing came from the Opera House orchestra led by Danny Walters. He did do some rock numbers with The Shadows later though and they also had their own spot in the show.

The 14th of October 1961 was Cliff's 21st birthday. I'm not aware of what other presents he got but E.M.I gave him a special album '21 Today' (33SX1368), with the cover photo showing him surrounded by The Shadows blowing out the candles on his cake. The 'Melody Maker' had a four page supplement celebrating the event.

1961 saw the first of the big-budget musicals starring Cliff, with 'The Young Ones' getting its world premiere amid much publicity and an all star occasion at Warner's Leicester Square Theatre on Wednesday 13th December. The story is all about a group of teenagers who put on a show and its main songs are the title number plus 'Living doll' and 'When the girl in your arms is the girl in your heart'. The following year the lads took a London Transport double-decker bus to Greece for 'Summer Holiday' and in 1964 a luxury liner took them all to Africa for 'Wonderful Life'.

During 1961, as well as South Africa, Cliff and The Shadows visited Norway, Sweden, Australia and New Zealand and in January 1962 were off to Iceland. Television exposure in 1961 included his own ITV series 'Cliff', several appearances on Billy Cotton's 'Wakey Wakey Tavern', 'Thank Your Lucky Stars' and 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium' on which he starred on New Year Eve. On Radio Luxembourg Cliff joined Helen Shapiro presenting 'Monday Spectacular' for E.M.I Records.

While continuing to top male singer of the year polls, he was voted 'Show-business Personality of 1961' by the Variety Club of Great Britain.

Throughout the sixties Cliff's hit records just kept coming with 'The next time', 'Bachelor boy', 'Summer holiday', 'The minute you're gone' and 'Congratulations' all reaching number one. The latter was Britain's 1968 Eurovision Song Contest entry, where Cliff came second. Other great hits of the sixties that almost made the top were 'Do you wanna dance', 'It'll be me', 'Lucky lips', 'It's all in the game', 'Don't talk to him' and 'Wind me up (let me go)'.

Towards the end of the decade it was a possibility Cliff would give up show business having developed a strong religious faith, but he decided he could best spread the good word by continuing to perform.

I've no doubt that more newspaper column inches have been written about Cliff Richard's life and career than any other British singer and I've no intention of competing. Cliff has always moved with the changing times in popular music and come out tops with them all. Suffice to say he has earned his success, giving a great deal of pleasure to generations of fans.

In 1998, to celebrate his 40th anniversary with them, although they parted company soon after, E.M.I. issued Cliff's first six LP's, in their original mono format, on six CD's.

As we approach the second decade of the 21st century, Cliff is still filling concert halls and how

many other fifties artists can say that.
Ian Samwell died in March 2003.

Cliff Richard Recordings
COLUMBIA
(with *The Drifters*)
DB 4178 Aug 58 'Schoolboy crush / Move it'
DB 4203 Oct 58 'High class baby / My feet hit the ground'
DB 4249 Jan 59 'Livin' lovin' doll / Steady with you'
DB 4290 Apr 59 'Mean streak / Never mind'
DB 4306 May 59 'Living doll / Apron strings'
DB 4351 Oct 59 'Travelin' light / Dynamite'
(The Drifters now The Shadows)
DB 4398 Jan 60 'A voice in the wilderness / Don't be mad at me'
DB 4431 60 'Willie and the hand jive / Fall in love with you'
DB 4479 60 'Please don't tease / Where is my heart'
DB 4506 60 'Nine times out of ten / Thinking of our love'
DB 4547 60 'I love you / "D" in love'
DB 4593 61 'Theme for a dream / Mumbly Mose'
DB 4667 61 'A girl like you / Now's the time to fall in love'
DB 4716 61 'When the girl in your arms is the girl in your heart (with orch) / Got a funny feeling'
DB 4761 62 'The young ones / We say yeah'
DB 4828 62 'I'm lookin' out the window (with orch) / Do you want to dance'
DB 4886 62 'Since I lost you / It'll be me'
DB 4950 62 'The next time / Bachelor boy'
DB 4977 63 'Summer holiday / Dancing shoes'
DB 7034 63 'I wonder (with orch) / Lucky lips'
DB 7089 63 'It's all in the game (with orch) / Your eyes tell on you'
DB 7150 63 'Don't talk to him / Say you're mine'
DB 7203 64 'Watch what you do with my baby / I'm the lonely one'
DB 7272 64 'Constantly (with orch) / True, true lovin''
DB 7305 64 'A matter of moments / On the beach'
DB 7372 64 (with orch) 'The twelfth of never / I'm afraid to go home'
DB 7420 64 'I'm in love with you (with orch) / I could easily fall'
DB 7435 64 (with Audrey Bayley, Joan Palethorpe, Faye Fisher) 'This was my special day / I'm feeling oh so lovely'
DB 7496 65 (with orch) 'The minute you've gone / Just another guy'
DB 7596 65 'Just a little bit too late / On my word'
DB 7660 65 'The time in between / Look before you love'
DB 7745 65 (with orch) 'Wind me up (let me go) / The night'
DB 7866 66 'Blue turns to grey / Somebody loses'
DB 7968 66 (with orch) 'What would I do (for the love of a girl) / Visions'
DB 8017 66 'Time drags by / La la la song'
DB 8094 67 'In the country / Finders keepers'
DB 8150 67 'Why wasn't I born rich / It's all over'

(with orchestra)
DB 8210 67 'I'll come runnin' / I get the feelin''
DB 8245 67 'The day I met Marie / Our story book'
DB 8293 67 'Sweet little Jesus boy / All my love'
DB 8376 68 'Congratulations / High 'n' dry'
DB 8437 68 'I'll love you forever today / Girl, you'll be a woman soon'
DB 8476 68 'Marianne / Mr. Nice'
DB 8503 68 'What's more (I don't need her) / Don't forget to catch me (with The Shadows)'
DB 8548 69 'Good times (better times) / Occasional rain'
DB 8581 69 'Big ship / She's leaving you'
DB 8615 69 'Reflections / Throw down a line (with Hank & The Shadows)'
DB 8641 69 'With the eyes of a child / So long'
DB 8657 70 'Leave my woman alone / Boogitoo (Hank Marvin) / The joy of living (Cliff & Hank)'
DB 8685 70 'Goodbye Sam, hello Samantha / You never can tell'
DB 8708 70 'I ain't got time anymore / Monday comes too soon'
DB 8747 71 'Sweet honey girl / Don't move away / I was only fooling myself'
DB 8774 71 'Silvery rain / Annabella umbrella / Time flies'
DB 8797 71 'Flying machine / Pigeon'
DB 8836 71 'Sing a song of freedom / A thousand conversations'
DB 8864 72 'Jesus / Mister Cloud'
DB 8917 72 'Living in harmony / Empty chairs'
DB 8957 72 'A brand new song / The old accordion'
E.M.I.
2012 73 'Power to all our friends / Come back Billie Joe'
2022 73 'Days of love / Ashes to ashes'
2088 73 'Take me high / Celestial house'
2150 74 'You keep me hanging on / Love is here'
2279 75 'It's only me you've left behind / You're the one'
2344 75 'Honky tonk angel / Got myself a girl'
2376 75 'Miss you nights / Love enough'
2458 76 'Devil woman / Love on (shine on)'
2499 76 'I can't ask for anymore than you / Junior cowboy'
2559 76 'Hey Mr. Dream Maker / No one waits'
2584 77 'Nothing left for me to say / My kinda life'
2633 77 'When two worlds drift apart / That's why I love you'
2730 78 'Good on the Sally Army / Yes he lives'
2832 78 'Please remember me / Please don't tease'
2885 78 'Can't take the hurt anymore / Needing a friend'
2920 79 'Green light / Imagine love'
2975 79 'We don't talk anymore / Count me out'
5003 79 'Walking in the light / Hot shot'
5006 79 'Carrie / Moving in'
5095 80 'Dreamin' / Dynamite'
5123 80 'Little in love / Keep on looking'
5221 81 'Wired for sound / Hold on'
5251 81 'Daddy's home / Shakin' all over'

5318	82	'The only way out / Under the influence'
5341	82	'Where do we go from here / Discovering'
5348	82	'Little town / Love and a helping hand /
		You me
and Jesus'		
5385	83	'True love ways / Galadriel'
5415	83	'Never say die / Lucille'
5437	83	'Please don't fall in love / Too close to heaven'
5457	84	'Baby you're dynamite / Ocean deep'
5531	85	'She's so beautiful (two versions)'
5537	85	'It's in every one of us / Alone (inst)'
5545	86	'Born to rock and roll / Law of the universe
8068		'A little love / Everyman'

Janet RICHMOND

This former Glasgow shop assistant began singing during the late fifties in a local dance hall. Spotted by Norm Riley, manager of American singer Jimmy 'Handy Man' Jones, he added her to his U.K. package tour. This in turn led to 19 year old Janet's 1960 recordings on the Top Rank label and several appearances on ATV's 'Lunch Box' TV series, plus other radio and television bookings including a 'Saturday Spectacular' with Anthony Newley on 4th March 1961.

A tour of Germany was followed by a spell in cabaret at the Astor Club in London's West End and then she was off, in March 1961, to Las Vegas for six week season at the famous Flamingo Club on a reported \$1,000 a week. What happened next I've never found out.

Janet Richmond Recordings
TOP RANK

JAR288	Jan 60	'You got what it takes / Not one minute
		<i>more' (acc by Johnny Spence orch)</i>
JAR378	May60	'June bride / My one and only love'
JAR536	Jan 61	'Senora / I need you'

Robin RICHMOND

England's foremost pioneer of the Hammond electric organ, Robin was for many decades the leading stylist on the instrument. Son of a doctor, he was born in 1912 and educated at Westminster School and London University. It was during his school-days that he first became interested in the organ. Each school day began with a service in Westminster Abbey and he inevitably crept into the organ loft where he was overawed by organist Dr. O. H. Peasgood's command of such a massive instrument. He eventually persuaded the famous organist to give him lessons.

Robin's musical ambitions were not encouraged by his family, who had plans for their son in the legal profession. However, after he had failed his law exams for the third time, they gave up and Robin found a job as organist at a Lambeth Mission Hall, a job he lost when he attempted to 'jazz-up' the service. From here he moved on to Streatham Astoria as orchestra organist and then worked his way round the cinema organ circuit, including two years at Brighton. When the massive organ at Brighton Dome opened it was

Robin Richmond who played the first 'swing' music on it.

Quick to appreciate the possibilities of the new Hammond electric organ sound (amplified music produced by discs rotating in an electromagnetic field - invented in America by Laurens Hammond, the first model was made in 1934 for Paseo Methodist Church, Kansas City) Robin was the first person to purchase a Hammond organ in England (in fact he bought two). With the portable capabilities of this new organ he was now able to take it on tour and by the mid-thirties was working his way across Europe.

He appeared in Cecil Landau and George F. Rubens' 1937 revue 'It's In the Bag' at the Saville Theatre in London's Shaftesbury Avenue, where two big scenes were built around his organ playing. Having already broadcast over Continental radio his first BBC airing was on 'Palace of Varieties' on 28th May 1938. He soon made further broadcasts on this and other programmes including 'Radio Pie' and toured music halls in a stage version of the latter with the Two Leslies.

In the early years of the war (he had been declared unfit for service due to health problems) he played at the Piccadilly Hotel in cabaret and was resident organist at the Florida Club, playing for dancing and accompanying singer Adelaide Hall. While at the Florida Club he built a small dance band around the organ calling it Organ Grinder Swing. Robin later moved to the Hammersmith Palais and often broadcast from there. His sextet also played numerous 'Music While You Work' programmes.

A tempting offer in 1940 saw Robin take over control of the big Compton theatre organ (four-deck, ten rank with Melotone) at the Paramount Dance Hall in Tottenham Court Road. At the same time the BBC signed him for regular programmes on their overseas service, using one of his own Hammond instruments. By the end of the war, as a staff organist, he was one of the BBC's most often heard artists doing about ten broadcasts a week. Robin appeared in and helped write the screen-play and music for the 1943 semi-documentary musical film 'Rainbow Round the Corner'.

After the war, while remaining as resident organist of the Gaumont British cinema circuit, Robin with his Organ Grinder Swing group, who in late 1947 were Barry Wicks (no relation) vibraphone, Eric McDermott drums, Sam Harding piano and vocalist Lena Hale, went on a tour of variety theatres. They played seasons at the Astoria Dance Hall, Charing Cross Road and the '96' Restaurant in Piccadilly and toured Germany and Holland. The group backed Brazilian Bombshell Carmen Miranda during her UK visit in May 1948.

An enthusiastic speedway supporter - he once said he was probably more interested in speedway racing than playing the organ - Robin commentated on the sport for BBC radio and sometimes played organ from a stage set up in the centre of the track at Rayleigh Stadium.

On radio his Organ Grinder Swing programmes were very popular (for broadcasts and recording the line up was augmented to organ, piano, vibraphone, trumpet, bass, drums and guitar) while Robin also excelled as a presenter of shows

like 'Housewives Choice' and 'Jazz Club'. He also appeared solo on 'Variety Bandbox' and the like. Robin can be seen playing organ, surrounded by showgirls, in the 1949 musical-comedy-mystery film 'Murder at the Windmill'. He was voted top organist of the year in a 1951 Melody Maker poll. Throughout the fifties his organ playing was a regular attraction at The Celebrite (formally Fischer's Restaurant) one of London's popular West End night-spots. Initially a member of a group there led by clarinist Wally Rocket, he later mainly appeared solo. Robin also played seasons at the Cafe de Paris and the Lyceum Ballroom. In between his club work he continued to tour in variety, sometimes as a trio with Reg Wale on vibraphone and accordion and Den Piercy on drums.

In 1954 he joined up with singer Benny Lee for a variety road-show titled 'Mr. Words and Mr. Music' and during 1955 undertook an extensive tour in comedian Fred Emney's 'Emney Enterprises' show that also featured singer Dorothy Carless. Robin had already worked with Fred Emney on his television series of the same name.

Other media exposure included more 'Music While You Work' (over 100 in total) and 'Bright and Early' broadcasts and he still regularly presented 'Housewives Choice'. He supplied the musical backing for "Bumper Fun Book" comedian Robert Moreton's radio series 'Bumblethorpe'. Over on Radio Luxembourg his organ playing helped Hughie Green's 'Opportunity Knocks' and 'Double Your Money' shows go with a swing and he had his own long running D.J. series.

It's a pity that his output on record was relatively small, with just a handful on H.M.V. followed by slightly more on the Polygon label. In 1959 he recorded a couple of sides for the cut-price Saga company, issued as their first single, under the name The Saga Satellites it featured Robin with rhythm backing sounding off in a Lord Rockingham's XI style.

Robin with his Rhythm greeted the sixties as resident group at the new State Ballroom, part of the huge old Kilburn State Theatre, and continued to play his swinging music way into the seventies. He was one of the pioneers of the popular radio series, 'The Organist Entertains', still going today..

Come the eighties he had retired to live with his French wife Renee in Nice. Robin died on 27th July 1998.

Robin Richmond Recordings

H.M.V. (Organ Grinder Swing / Orchestra)

BD 1132 Jun 46 (OGS) 'Pas de quatre / Kilkeny cats

(v.

Benny Lee)

BD 1144 Oct 46 (O) 'Alice blue gown / The miller of the dee'

BD 1155 Jan 47 (O) 'Steamboat Bill / Captain Nipper

(both v.

Benny Lee)

BD 1249 Jun 49 (OGS) 'A girl could be a wonderful thing

(v. Den Piercy & The

Debonaires)

Humble people (v. The

Debonaires)

POLYGON (with rhythm)

P 1031 Jan 52 'What a difference a day made / That ever-

lovin' rag'

P 1059 Jan 53 'Young and healthy / Ecstasy'

P 1065 Mar 53 'Buffoon / That naughty waltz'

P 1091 Dec 53 'The creep / Park Plaza'

P 1093 Jan 54 'The velvet glove / Windmill waltz'

P 1125 Jly 54 'Valse gries (The grey waltz) /

Hysterics rag'

P 1172 Jun 55 'Theme from film Time of his Life /

Crinoline waltz'

P 1190 Oct 55 'Organ-ising the blues / Some like it hot'

PYE (re-issue of Polygon sides)

N 15037 Feb 56 'Organ-ising the blues / Some like it hot'

N 15171 Dec 58 'The velvet glove / Windmill rag'

SAGA (as The Saga Satellites)

2901 Feb 59 'Swingin' sporrans / Regimental rock

(with R.S.M

Brittain)

Paddy ROBERTS

A prolific writer of song lyrics, many with a somewhat off-beat message, Paddy put several on to disc himself, simply because at the time nobody else would.

John Godfrey Owen Roberts, born in South Africa around 1910, was always one to do the unexpected, much to his father's distress. Roberts senior had paid for his son to have a first class expensive education at King's School, Canterbury, only to see him run away to sea. Paddy had studied law and was a junior in a South African solicitors' practice when in 1934, with just £12 in his pocket, he signed on as a crew member of a freight ship leaving for England.

Arriving in London Paddy took a number of jobs, including one third of a vocal trio on Radio Luxembourg shows. Eventually he joined the song writing team of Elton Box & Desmond Cox contributing lyrics to several of their songs including 'Horsey horsey' and 'Angel of the great white way'.

By now war was imminent and in it Paddy excelled himself as an R.A.F Coastal Command ferry pilot. This experience wasn't wasted after the war when he joined B.O.A.C as a pilot flying the Atlantic route. But ever impulsive, by the early fifties Paddy had packed it in to return to lyric writing and joined Chappells the music publishers as a song plugger.

The fifties proved to be Paddy's most productive years, his first big success coming with 'The book' a big hit for David Whitfield early in 1954. He followed this with Ruby Murray's number one success 'Softly softly' and also provided Ruby with 'Evermore' and 'You are my first love', the latter from the John Mills film 'It's Great To Be Young'. Paddy also wrote 'In love for the very first time' an Ivor Novello award winning song featured in the film 'An Alligator Named Daisy'

and recorded by Jean Carson. Paddy was associated with other Ivor Novello award songs, namely 'Got 'n idea' in 1955 and 'Three brothers' in 1957.

One of Paddy's specialities was in providing English lyrics to foreign songs. In 1953 he turned an old Romanian folk song, 'Sanie cu zurgalai', into 'Johnny's the boy for me'. Anne Shelton's hit song 'Lay down your arms' came from Sweden and Eve Boswell's 'Pickin' a chicken' from South Africa', both with English lyrics by Paddy. More songs to have benefited from his prolific pen are 'Meet me on the corner' a No.2 hit for Max Bygraves late in 1955, 'That dear old gentleman' another popular number for Max the following year, 'The good companions' from the 1957 film of the same name that was recorded by Billy Cotton and 'It's a boy' one of Lita Roza's Pye recordings in 1958.

By the sixties Paddy had developed his 'alternative' style. He wrote 'The ballad of Bethnal Green' for Benny Hill but Benny wasn't interested so he recorded it himself and, issued on an E.P, it sold over 70,000 copies. Decca took notice and his L.P 'Strictly for Grown Ups' (DFE6584) followed. Next came 'Paddy Roberts Strikes Again' (DFE6641) and 'Paddy Roberts Tries Again' (LK4358), each one full of Paddy's unique humorous, slightly naughty but inoffensive ditties.

Now regarded as not just a lyric writer but a performer, he began appearing in cabaret around London. 'Paddy Roberts at the Blue Angel' (LK 4410) was another Decca L.P in 1960. He also had his own radio series 'Paddy-Whack' for a while, but eventually the novelty wore off and Paddy dropped back into relative obscurity again. I believe he died at his home in Devon during August 1975.

Eric ROBINSON

Born 1908 at Leeds into a musical family, his father was a brilliant organist and his mother a singer. His elder brother Stanford became a well known conductor of serious music. The family moved to London and Eric was educated at Watford Grammar School, becoming school captain. At 18 he entered the Royal College of Music to study violin and guitar.

Early in his professional career he played violin in restaurant orchestras and later in the BBC Theatre Orchestra led by his brother, until he was forced to leave by a BBC policy that prevented relatives from working together. Eric then played second violin with the London Philharmonic before, in late 1936, joining the pre-war BBC Television Orchestra at Alexandra Palace.

During his wartime army service, Eric helped to form and was a leader of the R.A.O.C. Dance Orchestra, better known as the Blue Rockets. He also became deputy conductor, to George Melachrino, of the British Band of the Allied Expeditionary Force.

Back in civvy street, Eric continued for a time to lead the Blue Rockets, before bringing his acute business talents into partnership with George Melachrino, creating the Melachrino Organization and becoming joint leader of orchestras appearing under that banner. In 1947, while still

continuing the partnership, Eric joined the re-formed BBC Television Orchestra as arranger-conductor, eventually becoming musical director of the BBC Television Service.

In his own series 'Music For You', that began in the early 1950's, his warm jovial nature endeared him to viewers and the show ran for 14 years. In 1952 Eric was voted by The Television Society as the person who had done most for TV during the year. In November 1954 his orchestra and singers appeared at the Royal Command Performance presented by Val Parnell on the stage of the London Palladium Theatre in a Music for You feature. Eric continued to enhance the sounds coming from our TV sets throughout the fifties and sixties on numerous shows, more than often unseen by the viewer. He died on 24th July 1974, aged 65.

His orchestra made the occasional single, backing vocalists - listed are a few I know - there are certainly many others.

COLUMBIA

FB 3296	47	(with Rita Williams)	'Out of my dreams /	People will say
we're in love'				
FB 3320	Jly 47	(with Rita Williams)	'Try a little	
tenderness /				Tell me
Marianne'				
DB 2409	Jun 48	(with Josef Locke)	'Count your	
blessings /				When you were
sweet sixteen'				
H.M.V.				
B 9724	49	(with Gwen Catley)	'A man like you /	
nightingale'			The Russian	

Harry ROBINSON

Harry's alter ego was Lord Rockingham who with his rocking XI was resident on ITV's 'Oh Boy' teen shows during the late fifties. Born Henry Robertson in 1932, Harry first came to notice in 1950 when he led the semi-pro Lyrians Orchestra who that year won the 'Melody Maker' north region area dance band championship. The band was a regular attraction at Darlington's Drill Hall. Before being picked by television producer Jack Good to lead Rockingham's XI, Harry had been musical adviser and arranger to Jim Dale on 'Six Five Special' over at the BBC. Harry composed some of the music used on 'Oh Boy' including the band's big hit 'Hoots Mon' and made several records with that outfit for Decca.

By late 1959 following a dispute with Jack Good over the ownership of the name Lord Rockingham, Harry gave up claim to the title saying he intended to take a new outfit called 'The Hootsmen' on tour, but I don't think he ever did.

He took on arranging and backing duties for Top Rank and Decca and also recorded a number of instrumental discs, some being most unlike his 'Oh Boy' days having a lush string sound. His Top Rank LP 'Moody and Magnificent' (BUY019) was a prime example.

Harry worked with Lionel Bart on the score of

'Fing's Ain't What They Used To Be' and in 1960 went to Australia as MD on Tommy Steele's tour. He was musical director for other West End shows including 'Belle' a story by Wolf Mankowitz based on the life of Dr. Crippen.

In November 1958 Harry married wealthy heiress Myrtle Olive Arbuthnot, the niece of Lord Wharton. As Ziki Arnot she sought a career in show-business and they met when he auditioned her. They had four sons and the eldest became the 12th Baron. Harry died in January 1996.

Harry Robinson Recordings
(Lord Rockingham XI discs appear under that heading)

	TOP RANK	(<i>The Harry Robinson String Sound</i>)
JAR 325	Jun 60	'Wimowey / The skirt'
	DECCA	(<i>Harry Robinson's XV</i>)
F 11319	Jan 61	'Sentimental Journey / Heavy date'
	FONTANA	(<i>The Harry Robinson Crew</i>)
H 376	Feb 62	'Whisht, it's the twis(h)t / Son of twist'
267 230	Jun 62	'Some other love / Backscratcher'
	DECCA	(<i>The Robinson Crew</i>)
F 11591	Feb 63	'Wildcat / Like yodel'
F 11706	Jly 63	'Theme from BBC TV series Taxi /
Stormalong'		
	COLUMBIA	(<i>Harry Robinson Orchestra</i>)
DB 8677	70	'Love theme from film Airport /
King's Road'		Saturday in the
	E.M.I.	(<i>Harry Robinson Strings That Sing</i>)
EMI 2602	77	'The dreamer / Adagio (Albinoni)'

Eric ROGERS

From Halifax in Yorkshire, Eric Gaukroger (later shortened to a more pronounceable name) showed music promise from an early age. Moving with his parents to Morriston near Swansea, he started learning piano from Mr J. Rees accompanist to the Morrison Orpheus Choir (a decade or so later he would persuade the Decca Record Company to put the choir on record). By the age of sixteen Eric had also mastered clarinet and saxophone and by the age of eighteen had added trumpet and trombone and was playing in local dance bands. By now it was 1940 and Eric's playing days came to an end for a while when he signed up.

Following distinguished service as an R.A.F. fighter pilot in Burma, Eric found new fame as a first class arranger. An asset to any bandleader he worked with Howard Lucreft, Nat Temple, Bill Saville and was pianist in Eddie Calvert's 1948 rumba band.

Eric's first venture into band leading came in June 1949 when he opened with a nine piece at the Trocadero Restaurant in Piccadilly Circus. This lasted for a year, after which the band played a short season at the Orchid Room. He then returned to arranging, working in films - he collaborated with Larry Adler on 'Genevieve' - and as an arranger-conductor for Decca Records. He

made several piano hit medleys for the label during the early fifties when Charlie Kunz was indisposed due to health problems.

From April 1953 Eric was musical director of Jack Hylton's revue 'Happy as a King' starring Fred Emney, Shani Wallis and Dickie Henderson, that opened at Blackpool's Queens Theatre on the 6th, the start of a six week provincial tour before coming to London. In March 1954 he took over as leader of the Skyrockets becoming MD at the London Palladium where they were the resident orchestra. When the Skyrockets left in July 1955, Eric formed a new 21 piece orchestra to replace them.

As musical director of the Palladium, he led the backing for a score of the world's top artists and for several shows, including the great Ruby Murray - Norman Wisdom success 'Painting the Town'. When Commercial Television came along in September 1955 Eric's duties increased to include the music for programmes like 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium', for which he wrote the signature tune 'Startime'. After three years in such a demanding job, it's not surprising he needed a break and in April 1957 Cyril Ornadel took over, leaving Eric once again available to freelance. He continued to arrange and supervise recording sessions for Decca and made a number of instrumental albums with his own orchestra. He led a rhythm group on the variety stage in Derek Roy's show 'Rock with Roy' and appeared with a Trumpet Octet on ATV's 'Music Shop'.

In 1963 Eric was pianist-deputy leader of the Edmundo Ros Band. It was about this time that he took over from Bruce Montgomery the task of writing the scores for the series of 'Carry On' films. During the remaining sixties and seventies he scored 22 of them, as well as writing the songs that featured in three of them. In fact his later career was very much movie based and he wrote the music for 'The Iron Maiden', 'This Is My Street', 'A Horse Without A Head', 'Nurse On Wheels', 'Assault', 'Revenge', 'Quest For Love' and 'No Sex Please! We're British'.

Eric, who was fairly short with a chubby face, married second wife dancer Betty Haley at Caxton Hall on 25th September 1959 (his first marriage was to a Swansea girl and they had two sons, but later divorced). I believe Eric died in April 1981.

Eric made few single records, his first being piano solos. These came during the period when, due to illness, Charlie Kunz was unable to record his regular medleys. Harry Jacobson filled in with three and Eric supplied two more.

Eric Rogers Recordings
DECCA
(*piano solos*)

F 10340	Jun 54	'Six Hits of the Day medley No.4'
F 10376	Sep 54	'Six Hits of the Day medley No.5'
F 10692	Mar 56	(<i>Trio</i>) 'The Threepenny Opera theme / Aisha'

(*Eric Rogers and his Music*)

F 11080	Nov 58	'Tom Thumb's theme / Me voy pa'l pueblo'
F 11151	Jly 59	'Joanna / Lingering lovers'
F 11585	Feb 63	(<i>Orch</i>) 'The Iron Maiden film theme / Fly-wheel (from the

same film)'

Ronnie RONALDE

Probably many people who just dismiss Ronnie Ronalde as a whistler who recorded 'If I were a blackbird' and 'In a monastery garden', would be surprised to learn that he was one of the most successful British singers of the fifties and certainly ended that decade one of the wealthiest.

Born Ronald Waldron in 1923 into a poor household at Islington, London, as a boy he was soloist in the choir of St. Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield. Noticed by Arturo Steffani he was recruited as one of Steffani's Silver Songsters (Arturo Steffani later led the backing orchestra on many of Ronnie's recordings - and his manager was Stefi Steffani). Leaving school at 14 Ronnie decided to make show business a career, with his ability to imitate bird calls using no mechanical devices at all, the mainstay of his act. It was an act that also included whistling, yodelling and of course singing with a range that was to extend from operatic arias to popular song.

Following a break for wartime service with the Royal Engineers, Ronnie returned to the stage, but in 1947 a lack of bookings persuaded him to cross the Atlantic and try his luck in America. For six months he hitched his way from state to state taking work wherever he could. When in New York he auditioned at the famous Radio City Music Hall, but was turned down because they said no whistler could ever keep in tune with their 90 piece orchestra.

Returning to London he found that little had changed and was still only able to get the odd booking, including a bottom of the bill spot with Laurel and Hardy at the Finsbury Park Empire and a broadcast on 'Variety Bandbox'.

He decided that although it wasn't big time, work in the U.S. was more regular and so back he went. As luck would have it Radio City was staging a season of the production 'My Swiss Maid' and were looking for a whistler. Remembering Ronnie, they managed to track him down and when they learned he could also yodel the part was his. Subsequently he opened there on 8th January 1948, appearing before an audience of 9,000 doing five shows a day and six on Sundays (Radio City was no holiday camp - as far as the performers were concerned) for a nine weeks season. His reviews were good, very good, and when he next came home to the U.K. reports of his success had preceded him, ensuring many offers of work. Decca recorded him whistling and making bird calls, issuing his first disc in August 1948.

The management at Radio City having discovered the star potential of this young English entertainer, lost no time in asking him back and so on 6th October the same year he was back at that famous music hall in the Olsen & Johnson revue 'Hellzapoppin', once again coming out on top in reviews. As soon as 'Hellzapoppin' was over Ronnie came back to Britain and fulfilled all the demands for his appearance in variety and on radio. Norman Newell of Columbia Records saw him at Chelsea Palace theatre and signed him up, taking advantage of Decca's obvious lack of interest. His first Columbia disc, 'The Windmill

Song' was issued in July 1949, followed in October by what was to become one of his most popular recordings 'In a Monastery Garden'. Decca, perhaps realising what they had let slip away, also in October issued another of the whistling recordings they had made, billing him as just 'Ronalde'.

In December 1949 Ronnie was on radio with his own Christmas special 'The Ronnie Ronalde Show' and from July 1950 had a regular Thursday evening broadcast. In March 1950 Columbia issued Ronnie's next single and probably his best remembered song, 'If I Were a Blackbird', that also became one of the first discs to be re-issued on 45rpm when E.M.I. began selling them in 1953.

Also in March Ronnie was off to America again, to star in the Easter Show at Radio City his third appearance there, a rare experience for an American performer but exceptional for a British artist. Newspaper reports indicate all box office records were broken with queues at the theatre up to half a mile long.

As the fifties continued Ronnie was continually in demand, regularly topping the bill in variety while appearing on radio shows including his own series on Thursday evenings. His popularity can be measured by the fact that in 1951 he had 15 separate fan clubs in the U.K. alone. During the 1951 summer season he appeared on Britannia Pier, Great Yarmouth billed as the "Voice of Variety" with Max Bygraves. For the 1952 summer he was at Blackpool's Winter Gardens in George & Alfred Black's 'Happy Landings' with comedian Freddie Sales and the mad Morton Frazer Gang. During December Ronnie toured service camps in the Middle East.

Late in 1951 Columbia issued Ronnie's first Christmas party record 'Christmas in the Village' on a 12 inch 78rpm. Another 12 inch disc during 1951 was 'Columbia Cavalcade' featuring Ronnie with several other Columbia artists. This was also later reissued on 45rpm. During 1951-52 his singles were coming out at almost one a month.

By the end of 1951 he had turned himself into a company, Ronnie Ronalde Ltd. (although common now - it was most unusual then) and began investing his earnings in the stock market and property. By 1953 he was producing and financing his own variety shows. Ronnie's first big production was for the 1953 summer season at Great Yarmouth Britannia Pier, where reports claim takings had never been so good. On 2nd November 1953 he was a member of the bill at the Royal Variety Performance at London's Coliseum Theatre.

Not only popular at home and in the States, Ronnie toured throughout Europe where in many countries he became accepted as one of their own. This is demonstrated by a court case in Holland during 1954, when a 23 year old Dutchman was jailed for 18 months for obtaining money from women by posing as Ronnie Ronalde!

Come the summer of 1954 and he again presented his own show at Blackpool, and in 1955 was back at Great Yarmouth, this time at the Wellington Pier (the Britannia Pavilion burnt down in 1954) with The Beverley Sisters. They were together on a live TV broadcast from the

show on 30th June. Demand for his service in the U.K. had to fit between his numerous bookings around the world, including regular return trips to New York's Radio City. This earning power enabled him to indulge his love of expensive cars. In August 1954 he crashed his Lagonda and had to rely on just the Bentley!

Ronnie's output of recordings continued, including from the mid-fifties several aimed more at the popular end of the market like the 'Ballad of Davy Crockett', 'Robin Hood', 'The Happy Whistler' (and who could be happier than Ronnie?) and one obviously from his summer shows 'The Yarmouth Song'. For December 1955 there was a new party record, 'Christmas-tide with Ronnie Ronalde' a double sided medley. E.M.I. also reported that his recording of 'In a Monastery Garden' was still selling well in over twenty countries.

Early in 1955 he began a new Sunday radio series 'Down Memory Lane' supported by the BBC Variety Orchestra, with a second series the following year. More variety tours, more visits abroad then back to Gt. Yarmouth and the Wellington Pier in 1956 on a stage dominated by a 12 foot diameter reproduction of his Columbia record 'If I Were a Blackbird'. Supporting acts were comic Billy Whittaker and Terry Hall with Lennie the Lion. As soon as this show closed Ronnie was off for his 6th season at Radio City and then in November a TV show in Copenhagen with Michael Holliday and Edna Savage. More TV work at home included the Norman Evans and Jack Jackson shows.

Ronnie was turning down American offers of work worth thousands of dollars so as to fulfil his U.K. bookings, but in July 1957 he did travel to New York for a one night stand at Radio City on a bill at the premier of the Marilyn Monroe, Laurence Oliver film 'The Prince and the Showgirl' (then titled 'The Sleeping Prince').

Back in Britain he began a new venture as a Radio Luxembourg disc jockey on Thursday evenings with a show called 'The Happy Platter Spinner', supported by fellow D.J. Beryl Reid and by November had added a second show on 208 metres 'Sing and Be Happy' ably supported by tenor saxist Betty Smith and a Geoff Love Rhythm Group with Jackie Brown on organ.

For 1957 there were two Ronnie Ronalde seasonal records from Columbia, 'Christmas at Home' and 'Party Rhymes'. But by now Ronnie's record output was in decline, a new beat sound influenced by the American imports was being asked for by the record buyer and the companies were turning their energies towards fulfilling this end. Also the variety theatre was losing its battle with television and only teenage pop packages, of which Ronnie wanted no part, were being booked.

In February 1958 Ronnie joined Winifred Atwell and speed ace Donald Campbell in a Jack Hylton television feature, filmed on board a Britannia airliner while crossing the Atlantic. He was off for a short season at Radio City, on route to a six month tour of the Australian Tivoli theatre circuit in the show 'Femmes and Furs', that also featured The Merry Macs vocal group. The same year his recording 'Whistling skiffle' was heard on the sound track of the film weepy 'Innocent Sinners' that starred Flora Robson and David

Kossoff. The year closed with a rare pantomime appearance, in 'Cinderella' at Liverpool's Court Theatre.

Looking towards the future, in 1959 Ronnie bought the 70 bedroom St. Martin's Hotel on Guernsey, an investment that was to provide a large slice of his income over the next thirty years. Although now appearing less he played the 1959 summer season at the Southport Garrick Theatre and another pantomime, 'Babes in the Wood' at Weymouth Pavilion.

There were a few more records, seasonal discs in 1959 and 1961, and 'The Sound of Music' (that opened on the London stage in May 1961) was a natural for Ronnie's vocal talents, providing him with the double sided success, 'Edelweiss' and 'The lonely goatherd'. There were further summer seasons and occasional tours, but by the seventies he had gone into semi-retirement running his hotel.

In the early nineties Ronnie with his Austrian wife Rosemarie (they met in 1960 when she was a receptionist at his hotel) went to live on their farm at Stillwater near Auckland, New Zealand. Rose and Ronnie had three children Carolyn, Ronnie and Christina, who all helped in the business.

On Saturday 3rd February 1996 he was back in Britain for a one-off appearance on the Michael Barrymore TV show, whistling 'In a monastery garden' seemingly oblivious to Barrymore's (unkind) mickey taking.

Fast approaching the age of ninety Ronnie, now living in Queensland Australia, is said to be still very active.

Ronnie Ronalde Recordings

DECCA		(Whistling - labelled just as 'Ronalde')
F 8944	Aug 48	'When you're in love / Somewhere beyond the stars' (acc by Bob Farnon Orch)
F 9261	Oct 49	'Down in the forest / Bird song at eventide'
COLUMBIA		
DB 2554	Jly 49	'The windmill song / I found my romance in Vienna' (acc by Frank Chacksfield orch)
DB 2583	Oct 49	'In a monastery garden / Bells across the meadow' (acc by Frank Chacksfield orch)
DB 2654	Mar 50	'If I were a blackbird / Song of the mountains' (acc by Arturo Steffani orch)
DB 2678	May 50	'Sanctuary of the heart / On wings of song'
DB 2721	Aug 50	'Let me sing in echo valley / Tritsch tratsch polka'
DB 2756	Nov 50	'When you were sweet sixteen / The dream of Olwen'
DX 1694	Nov 50	(12 inch) 'Christmas in the village medley'
(two sides)		
DB 2783	Jan 51	'Down by the old Zyder Zee / Prayer in the

twilight'
DB 2803 Feb 51 'When the fields are white with
daises /

Last night'
DB 2839 Apl 51 'I leave my heart in an English
garden /

Song of

the thrush'
DB 2852 May 51 'Mockin' bird hill / Grandmother's
wedding

dress' (acc by Arturo

Steffani orch)
DX 1750 May 51 (12 inch) 'Bells of St.Marys' (part of
Columbia

Cavalcade

medley) (acc by

Phil Green

orch)
DB 2889 Jly 51 'Stars are the window's of heaven /
Mariandi'

DB 2916 Sep 51 'Lonely little robin / Rose of the
mountain'

DB 2941 Nov 51 'Skater's waltz / Grandfather Kringle'
(acc by

Arturo

Steffani orch)
DB 2989 Jan 52 'Down the trail of aching hearts /
I want to make my mother

proud of me'
DB 3002 Feb 52 'I miss my Swiss / Where the
sweetheart roses

grow' (acc by Arturo

Steffani orch)
DB 3031 Apl 52 'Springtime / Lady of Lake Lucerne'
DB 3076 Jun 52 'Soilder's in the park / Lo! hear the
gentle lark'

DB 3116 Aug 52 'With all my heart / Il bacio'
DB 3165 Oct 52 'Autumn evensong /

There's a little old church

on the hill'
DB 3190 Dec 52 'Forget me not / The whistling
yodeller'

DB 3218 Jan 53 'Because / Handel's largo'
DB 3285 Apl 53 'I believe / Auld lang syne for ever'
DB 3380 Dec 53 'Yodelling waltz / Skye boat song' (acc
by

Arturo

Steffani orch)
DB 3426 Feb 54 'The yodelling boy / The Danish
rhapsody'

DB 3436 Mar 54 'We'll always remember / On the
quarter deck'

DB 3474 May 54 'Safe in the harbour / My starlight
lullaby'

DB 3523 Sep 54 'Ave Maria / Angels sing'
DB 3689 Nov 55 'Christmas-tide with Ronnie Ronalde :
Jingle

bells / Sleep holy babe / Once in

Royal

David's City / O come all ye

faithful / The

first Noel / Away in a manger /

Brahms

lullaby / Bring in the

holy bough'
DB 3705 Jan 56 'Ballad of Davy Crockett /
Hair of gold,

eyes of blue'
DB 3734 Feb 56 'Robin Hood / Happy trails'
DB 3768 Apl 56 'The Yarmouth song / Macnamar's
band'

DB 3785 May 56 'The happy whistler /

The lady from

Luxembourg'
DB 3840 Oct 56 'Mirabelle / The yodelling rag' (acc by
Norrie

Paramor orch)
DB 3892 Feb 57 'The buccaneers / The mountain
climber'

DB 4003 Sep 57 'A bird sings / The Alpine polka'
DB 4020 Nov 57 'Christmas at home' (two sided
medley)
DB 4036 Nov 57 'Party rhymes' (two sides)
DB 4092 Mar 58 'Innocent sinners / Sweetwater
mountain'
DB 4320 Jun 59 'When it's springtime in the Rockies /
The

pleasant peasant'
DB 4367 Nov 59 'Christmas lullaby / Morning star'
DB 4644 Mar 61 'Edelweiss / The lonely goatherd'
DB 4734 Nov 61 'Good old Christmas day / Little white
berry'

Edmundo ROS

Edmundo, who did more than anyone to popularise Latin American music in Britain, was born in Trinidad on 7th December 1910, but brought up in Venezuela. His Scottish-Canadian father and Venezuelan mother hoped he would become a lawyer, but young Edmundo had other ideas and as a lad was quite rebellious. To instil some discipline they sent him off to a Military College. It was here he developed his interest in music when he joined the college band. Initially expected to play a baritone euphonium, he was allowed to transfer to bass drum when it became apparent he was too small to handle the large euphonium - although he did grow up to become a 6ft. 2in. adult. He also learned to play the saxophone.

Leaving military college after four years Edmundo went straight into the Orquesta Simfonica De Venezuela as a percussionist under the direction of Vincente Emilo Sojos. At the same time he ran his own dance band that was so popular it eventually became his full time job when they secured a contract to play in all the government's seaside hotels.

Ambitious and eager to further his musical knowledge he used his savings to travel, first to the United States and then to Britain, where he arrived in 1937, intending to study arranging at the Royal Academy of Music, but he needed a source of income first. So he took a job with Ciro Rimac's Rumba Band in the Cochrane revue 'Follow the Sun' and after the show's run toured the Continent with the same band.

In 1938 he was playing drums and tenor-sax in a small group at The Nest Club, where he was spotted during a visit there by Fats Waller. Fats asked Edmundo to play drums on a recording session that he made in London on 21st August 1938, when they recorded 'Ain't misbehavin'', 'The flat foot floogie', 'Pent up in a penthouse', 'Music, maestro, please' and 'A-tisket, a-tasket'.

Edmundo formed his own Cuban Trio and worked at several London night-spots including the Bermuda Club. By now he had discovered the public were favourably responsive when he added his own unmistakable reedy tenor vocals to the Latin-American rhythms he played, and this now became an important part of his performance.

In March 1939 Don Marino Barretto was asked to assemble a band for the Embassy Club and Edmundo agreed to help and become deputy leader. This was the first Latin-American style orchestra to be formed in this country. After about a year, following a policy disagreement, Edmundo left and for a while became a full time

emergency ambulance driver.

In August 1940 he re-formed his own band, working at the Cosmo Club in Wardour Street, Soho, at first calling it Ros's Rumba Romeos but the owner of the club didn't like that name so they became Edmundo Ros and his Rumba Band. Either way the job was short lived when under wartime emergency regulations the basement club premises were requisitioned for use as an air-raid shelter. A booking at the St. Regis Hotel off Piccadilly suffered a similar fate when the building was bombed during a performance, just two weeks after they opened there. Out of work and in desperation he took his band into the almost deserted Coconut Grove. With L.A. rhythms now catching on with the British public, it wasn't long before fans of the music, and of Edmundo Ros, were flocking to the club and he was playing to packed houses.

In 1941 he began recording with his band on Parlophone, switching to Decca about a year later. His 1949 Decca recording of 'Wedding samba' is reported to have sold three million copies over the years. It reached No.16 on the American Hit Parade. The Ros band appeared on one of the first Decca long play records to be issued in this country, 'L.A Rhythms' (LF1002) a 10 inch album out in June 1950.

Becoming something of a household name, late in 1942 he left the Coconut Grove to join George Black's London Palladium revue 'Best Bib and Tucker', which also featured Tommy Trinder and Nat Jackley and ran well into the following year. At the same time Ros was doubling at the Bagatelle (publicised as Mayfair's smartest restaurant). The band appeared in the 1945 musical film 'Flight from Folly' and the spy thriller 'Night Boat To Dublin' the following year. They also appeared in a night club sequence in the 1948 Huggetts' film 'Wedding Bells'.

While continuing to appear at the Bagatelle, a venue he worked for twelve years, Ros doubled at other clubs. On 4th August 1947 his band returned to the Astor, a club Edmundo had been associated with since 1943. He had left in a bit of a huff in February after a disagreement with the management over the fact that the other band at the club (Harry Roy's) was playing L.A. numbers. Ross made such a fuss over this, he was virtually sacked. He took up residency at Churchill's in Bond Street but after a few months the Astor asked him back with a new contract that forbid any other band there from playing in L.A. style. Harry Roy had already left at the end of July.

In 1950 the band undertook one of its rare variety tours, but confined itself to just London theatres. Beginning at Finsbury Park Empire on 6th March they progressed a week at a time to Shepherds Bush, Chiswick and Hackney Empires and Lewisham Hippodrome. And after every second house it was back to the Bagatelle for the late-shift.

With seemingly little time for anything other than music, Edmundo sneaked in a lightning courtship and on 19th October 1950 married 24 year old Swedish model Britt Kolming at Paddington Register Office.

On 5th February 1951 the band made its first appearance in a public ballroom (other than a club or restaurant), playing a one-night-stand at Hammersmith Palais. This led to a two month

season at the Strand Lyceum from May 1951, followed by one of their few out of London appearances, a Sunday concert at the Blackpool Opera House on 29th July.

By 1951 Edmundo was in a position to take a controlling interest in the Coconut Grove and he let it be known he intended to return to his old haunt, renaming it the New Coconut Grove. But after nine years residence the management of the Bagatelle Restaurant were loathe to lose such an excellent band and persuaded him to stay. So came about the unique situation in which Edmundo recruited a new band for the New Coconut Grove and fronted them both!

Not content with this, on 29th October 1951 he added another season at the London Palladium to his busy schedule. Seven weeks in the fast moving, colourful revue 'Peep Show' with Vera Lynn, Jack Jackson and Bryan Johnson. Despite his hectic lifestyle and late nights, from New Year's Eve Edmundo was up early in the morning when he began a spell introducing 'Housewives Choice'. With his easy manner he was an ideal compere and presented various programmes. The band could currently be heard on air in the series 'Golden Slipper Club', a series that had featured the Ros band since it began in 1948. Performed before a dancing audience at the BBC's studio in the old Paris Cinema, Regent Street and broadcast Saturday evenings, it had become a huge success.

Each summer Edmundo now took the band out of London's clubland on a three week 'holiday' break. During the 1952 summer they played their first season at Blackpool's Empress Ballroom, the following year they toured several holiday resorts with a variety package and in 1954 really lived it up with five weeks at Monte Carlo Sporting Club (at a fee reported as being £1,000 a week). Obviously hooked on the Mediterranean air (and no doubt the agreeable fee) Edmundo and the band returned to the Sporting Club most summers throughout the remaining fifties.

On radio they joined forces with the Ray Ellington Quartet for a Sunday lunchtime mix of musical styles in the series 'Mr. Ros and Mr. Ray'. Edmundo was a mainstay of 'Latin American Ballroom' a series that turned up on radio and television. On Radio Luxembourg the band appeared on 'Topps With Ros' sponsored by Topps furniture polish while Edmundo presented a record show, called the 'Samuel Driver Record Club'.

Over the years there had been no shortage of Edmundo Ros records on the Decca label, although during 1955 he did defect for a short while to Columbia. Popular songs, show tunes and South American standards (most of them with unpronounceable names) all presented in his inimitable style. He even had a go at the classics with the LP 'Ros at the Opera' (LK4304), just one of the dozens of albums he made.

During April 1960 Edmundo's band were in Nigeria to play at that country's independence celebrations, attended by Princess Margaret who was reported to be a big fan of Ros. Edmundo was also a big favourite in Japan, playing numerous concerts there. He recorded an album of Japanese marches arranged in Western style. The orchestra appeared on the October 1962

Royal Variety Performance at the London Palladium, in a Broadway Goes Latin feature. While still continuing to be successful worldwide, it was a dispute with his musicians in 1975 that finally brought about the end of the Edmundo Ros Orchestra. While on tour Edmundo had always insisted on a weekly rest day for him and the orchestra, but when the musicians went behind his back and agreed, for extra money, to play on their rest day he decided he had lost their trust and so it was time to pack it all in. He even spent over £700 having all his music shredded so no one else could ever play it, a rash decision he later regretted when during the late eighties he was asked to make some new recordings and had to have expensive new arrangement made. Edmundo with his second wife went to live in Spain and few sightings of him have been made since, although he did present a series of record shows for the BBC in the early nineties. Not totally forgotten, he was awarded an OBE in the Millennium New Year Honours list and BBC TV screened a documentary about him during October 2000, in which Edmundo, then fast approaching his 90th birthday, seemed to have lost none of his energy and wry humour. He died October 2011, aged 100, at his home in Spain.

Edmundo Ros Recordings
(many have a vocal by Ros)

PARLOPHONE

(Edmundo Ros Rumba Band)

- F 1832 Jun 41 'Mama yo quiero / Toku canto indio'
F 1839 Jly 41 'Los hijos de buda / Te quiero dijis te
(both v. ER
in Spanish)
F 1849 Aug 41 'I yi yi yi yi / They met in Rio
(both v. Peggy
McCormack)
F 1850 Sep 41 'Blen! blen! blen! (v. Santiago Lopez) /
Chica chica boom
chic (v. PM)
F 1863 Oct 41 'Aquellos ojos verdes (v. S L) / Un
memento'
F 1866 Nov 41 'Soltero es mejor / Mama yo busco un
querer'
F 1876 Dec 41 'Marie Elena (v. SL in Spanish) /
Zombie'
F 1883 Jan 42 'Fufanando (v. ER in Spanish) / Taboo
(v. SL)
F 1892 Feb 42 'Conga boom / Quiereme mucho'
F 1897 Mar 42 'Tropical magic / When I love, I love'
F 1910 Jun 42 'Buenas noches / Samba lele'
F 1917 Jly 42 'Divina mujer / No te importe saber'
F 1965 Mar 43 'Nightingale / La conga del amor'
F 2336 Feb 49 'Chevere / Manguerra'

DECCA

(Edmundo Ros Cuban Orch)

- F 8490 May 45 'You never say, you never say no /
Le seguire (v.
Ronaldo Mazar)
F 8508 Mar 45 'Tico tico / Come with me my honey'
F 8534 Jun 45 'Mexico (v. Ronaldo Mazar) / Baia'
F 8543 Aug 45 'Rum and lemonade / In chi-chi-
castenango'
F 8549 Sep 45 'The three caballeros / Jesusitae en
chihuahua'
F 8558 Oct 45 'Alma llanera / Drume negrita
(v. Ronaldo
Mazar)

(Edmundo Ros Rumba Band)

- F 8583 Jan 46 'Brazil moreno /
Negra consentida (My pet
brunette)
F 8598 Feb 46 'No can do / The parrot'
F 8608 May 46 'Dengozo / Chico chico'
F 8630 May 46 'Good good good / Take it away'
F 8636 Jly 46 'Without you (v. Ronaldo Mazar) /
The
cocoanut song'
F 8649 Aug 46 'Tampico / Coax me a little bit'
F 8665 Sep 46 'I'm crazy for you / It was never like
this'
F 8681 Oct 45 'Come closer to me (v. Ronaldo
Mazar) /
Cavaquinho'
F 8708 Nov 46 'Her bathing suit never got wet /
Stone cold dead in
the market'
F 8725 Feb 47 'Chiquita banana /
Cancion Cubana (Cuban
love song)
F 8746 Feb 47 'Rio / A man is a brother to a mule'
F 8757 Apl 47 'Tell me again (v. Ronaldo Mazar) /
Quimbamba'
F 8777 Jun 47 'Another night like this / Maracas'
F 8800 Sep 47 'I got the sun in the morning / The
coffee song'
F 8801 Sep 47 'A rainy night in Rio / El toreador'
F 8815 Nov 47 'Managua Nicaragua /
South America,
take it away'
F 8841 Feb 48 'Quien no llora no mama /
El truco de
pernam buco'
F 8853 Mar 48 'The laughing samba / Money, money,
money'
F 8869 Apl 48 'Brazil (v. Ramos de Carvalho) /
Rio
de Janeiro'
F 8882 May 48 'Manana / Zacatecas'
F 8895 Jly 48 'Jungle rumba / Tia Maria'
F 8923 Jly 48 'The big brass band from Brazil /
The crow and the
blackbird'
F 8945 Aug 48 'Jungle drums / It's easy when you
know how'
F 8955 Sep 48 'Moonlight on Brazil (v. Denny
Vaughan) /
Batuque no morro'
F 8977 Oct 48 'No money / Relatives, relatives'
F 9012 Nov 48 'The whistle samba / Maria from
Bahia'
F 9046 Dec 48 'Cuanto le gusta / Rumba royal'
F 9059 Jan 49 'La golondrina / La borrachita'
F 9108 Mar 49 'The Maharajah of Magador /
Paraquedista'
F 9109 Mar 49 'The tourist trade / Run run run'
F 9120 Apl 49 'La paloma / Maria la o'
F 9132 May 49 'Society / Is it yes, is it no'
F 9146 Jun 49 'Cumana / Is it yes or is it no'
F 9170 Jun 49 'Similau' (on one side only)
F 9189 Jly 49 'The hat seller / Copacabana'
F 9196 Aug 49 'Brown skin gal / Opportunity'
F 9200 Oct 49 'The wedding samba / The bullfrog'
F 9217 Sep 49 'Too much tempo in my rumba beat /
El baile del
sillon'
F 9229 Oct 49 'Armadillo / Doin' the samba'
F 9262 Nov 49 'Chocolate, whiskey and vanilla gin /
Samba
samba'
F 9287 Jan 50 'High in Sierra / Wonderful illusion'
F 9306 Dec 49 'The Scottish samba /
Have a jug of wine with
pancho'
F 9321 Feb 50 'Who shot the hole in my sombrero /

Congo, jungle

samba'
F 9340 Feb 50 *(Edmundo Ros Orch)*
'More and more amour samba /
Mama's

samba'
F 9353 Mar 50 'Zing-a-zing-a-zing boom /
'Tis only a matter of mind

over matter'
F 9390 Apl 50 'My favourite samba / Chiquita
banana'
F 9400 May 50 'No no my sweey Lolita /
If I can't Hav-ana

in Cuba'
F 9413 May 50 'Mondongo mambo / Gandinga
mambo'
F 9457 Jly 50 'Little jug / Mexican merry-go-round'
F 9466 Jly 50 'Bolero / La marchina samba'
F 9484 Sep 50 'Mambo jambo / Take her to Jamaica
samba'
F 9487 Nov 50 'Yess - they call it yaass samba /
Sammy's

little samba'
F 9495 Nov 50 'Tzena tzena tzena / Cuban mambo'
F 9529 Nov 50 'Coimbra, Sambo-jongo / Mambo in F'
F 9542 Nov 50 'Maria Dolores bolero / Gimpel
baynish rumba'
F 9555 Dec 50 'Samba polka / Mamabo'
F 9569 Dec 50 'I love to mambo / Chi bim bam boom
samba'
F 9582 Jan 51 'Mambo No.5 / Hora samba'
F 9601 Feb 51 'The wooden soldier samba /
The chilly chiquita

from Chile'
F 9602 Feb 51 'More more mambo / The match-box
samba'
F 9611 Mar 51 'Coco-coconut samba / Virgin Islands
calypso'
F 9626 Mar 51 'Mambo negro / The fidgety samba'
F 9645 Apl 51 'Tipperary samba / The cheeky
parakeet'
F 9662 May 51 'Deesappointment / Samba rhapsody'
F 9671 May 51 'Francesca beguine / Coffee, cocoa,
tea'
F 9684 Jun 51 'Yankee doodle samba / Pocket Pete
rumba'
F 9690 Jun 51 'The Festival of Britain calypso /
Little

pepita samba'
F 9695 Jun 51 'Choo-choo samba /
He like it! she like

it! calypso'
F 9698 Jun 51 'One at a time calypso /
Have you

seen my love'
F 9702 Jly 51 'London is the place for me /

Playtime in Brazil'
F 9714 Jly 51 'Mary Ann / Violin voila'
F 9751 Sep 51 'It never happen' to me / Happiness
calypso'
F 9759 Oct 51 'The merry mambo / Morocco bolero'
F 9774 Dec 51 'The happy bird / Pedro's pretty sister'
F 9786 Nov 51 'They say the woman always pays /

Noche bueno'
F 9810 Dec 51 'Say si si / Baiao'
F 9812 Jan 52 'Madalena / La bota'
F 9815 Jan 52 'Jingle bells calypso / The nursery
samba'
F 9851 Feb 52 'Rendezvous / Toselli's serenade'
F 9884 Apl 52 'Delicado / Poco loco in the coco'
F 9895 Apl 52 'Calla calla /
Boys and girls like

Saturday night'
F 9908 May 52 'Square dance samba / Ugly woman
calypso'
F 9925 Jun 52 'Tricks of the trade calypso / Las
Vegas'
F 9926 Jun 52 'Blue tango / A-round the corner

(v. ER & Rita Williams)

Singers)
F 9935 Jly 52 'Perfidia / Carioca'
F 9975 Oct 52 'Enchantment / Shoo the little fly
away'
F 9996 Nov 52 'Marching strings / Ecstasy'
F 9999 Nov 52 'Jambalaya / Tonight's the night'
F 10026 Dec 52 'Paladinho / My pet'
F 10060 Mar 53 'I talk to the trees / Flying flutes'
F 10087 Apl 53 'The kiss / My jealous eyes (v. Dinah
Kaye)'
F 10088 Apl 53 'Coronation samba / Coronation
calypso'
F 10120 Jun 53 'April in Portugal / Valencia'
F 10147 Aug 53 'The queen of Tonga / It was never
like this'
F 10158 Sep 53 'Sorta on the border / Play, play, play'
F 10202 Nov 53 'Matilda / Chivi rico'
F 10214 Dec 53 'Blowin' wild / Istanbul'
F 10224 Jan 54 'Passion tango / And then -?'
F 10249 Mar 54 'The door senior / Senorita'
F 10251 Mar 54 'John Peel / Baion'
F 10258 Mar 54 'Anything can happen mambo /
Be true to me -

Carnavalito'
F 10263 Mar 54 'Somebody bad stole de wedding bell /
Chili

sauce'
F 10314 Jun 54 'Military samba / Lover's tango'
F 10480 Mar 55 'Cherry pink and apple blossom white /
Ole

mambo'
COLUMBIA

DB 3576 Feb 55 'Hot potato mambo / Much, much too
much'
DB 3597 Apl 55 'That's the way love goes / Goombay'
DB 3634 Jly 55 'Sweet and gentle / Freddy
(both v. Julie
Dawn)'
DB 3669 Oct 55 'Si senior / Sunshine and ole'

DECCA

F 10610 Sep 55 'Grey clouds / Les claves'
F 10669 Dec 55 'Sixteen tons / Robin Hood'
F 10716 Mar 56 'Mister Cuckoo / Don't ringa da bell'
F 10834 Jan 57 'Jamaica farewell / I saw Esau'
F 10907 Jly 57 'Thwe carnation girl / Melodie
d'amour'
F 10954 Nov 57 'The pansy / Bahia bambaree'
F 10988 Feb 58 'Colonel Bogey / Isle of Capri'
F 11030 Jun 58 'Tipi tipi tipso / Saunabad'
F 11043 Aug 58 'Swingin' shepherd blues / Tom Hark'
(part of Star Band Hit

Parade)
F 11056 Sep 58 'A night of adventure / After you've
gone'
F 11092 Dec 58 'The Harry Lime theme cha-cha /
Love is a many splendoured thing

cha-cha'
F 11098 Jan 59 'Monte Carlo cha-cha / Zaragoza cha-
cha'
F 11113 Feb 59 'I talk to the trees cha-cha /
I whistle a

happy tune'
F 11150 Jly 59 'Scotland the brave / Comin' thro' the
rye'
F 11379 Aug 61 'La chaconga' (two parts)
F 11533 Nov 62 'One note samba / Desafinado'
F 11633 Jun 63 'Maria's her name / Mediterranean'
F 12813 Jly 68 'Cumana / Mas que nada'
F 13349 Oct 72 'Ave Maria no morro / Love thy
neighbour'

Margaret ROSE

A redhead from Halifax, she began her singing career at the age of 16 with the Les Garratt band

at Bradford, before a spell on tour with Harry Gold's Pieces of Eight during 1954. She then returned north for seasons with Eric Lawe at Morecambe and Gene Mayo at the Nottingham Astoria.

In June 1956 twenty year old Margaret replaced Anne Haven in the Geraldo vocal line up. Married to Northern Dance Orchestra guitarist Dennis Newey, who was based at Manchester, she obviously preferred to work up north and spent the 1957 summer season in the show on Blackpool Central Pier. During July 1958 she was at the Tower Ballroom with Billy Ternent and his orchestra and also joined Billy on his 13 week 'Ternent Time' radio series, which also featured Gary Miller.

Annie ROSS

For Annie it wasn't a question of "would she enter the entertainment business", with such a pedigree it was just a question of "when". Mum and dad were the well known Scottish dancing act of Jack Short and May Dalziel, her aunt was Scots singer Ella Logan; brothers and sisters were Bert, Heather and Jimmy Logan (a Scottish comic who also appeared in England). Another brother, Buddy Logan sang with Geraldo. With all this Scottish blood in her veins, it's surprising to learn that Annabelle Short herself was in fact born on 25th July 1930 at Mitcham, Surrey (her parents were touring England at the time).

At the age of three she went to live in America with Aunt Ella, who had become a popular musical and film star over there. It wasn't long before little Annie was also treading the boards, at the age of five she sang with Paul Whiteman's Orchestra and a year later as Annabella Logan, was appearing in the 'Our Gang' comedy films. She also played alongside Judy Garland in the 1943 M.G.M musical 'Presenting Lily Mars'.

Having grown up into a slim, very attractive redhead, with a distinctive jazz orientated voice she sang with several American bands. In 1947 Annie returned to the U.K. and was signed by Bert Ambrose to sing with Reg Arnold's Band at London's Orchid Room. Giving a performance described by the musical press as "out of this world" in 1948 she played in the revue 'Burlesque' with comedian Bonar Colleano.

Then she was off again, this time to live in France, becoming the darling of Paris jazz clubs. In 1953 Annie was voted No.1 female singer by Le Jazz Hot magazine. When Lionel Hampton's band toured Europe she was signed up as vocalist, until Hamp suddenly and unexpectedly fired her in September 1953. George Wallington, the band's pianist, resigned in protest.

Following a spell in Monte Carlo, Annie came back to London playing cabaret in several clubs, plus a recording session for the Esquire label. In April 1954 she joined the Jack Parnell Band on their 'Jazz Wagon' touring show and recorded with them on Parlophone. Later in the year when drummer Tony Crombie formed a new outfit, Annie moved over to join him, opening at Stockton Palais on 22nd October. She made several Decca discs with Crombie, plus an E P, 'Nocturne for Vocalist' on the Pye Nixa label.

'Cranks' that first opened at London's New Watergate Theatre on 19th December 1955, was a revue that was intended to send up popular revue of the day. Conceived by Sadlers Wells choreographer John Cranko with music by John Addison, it starred a cast of four. All virtual newcomers they were Anthony Newley, Hugh Bryant, Gilbert Vernon and Annie. It proved to be an outstanding hit, moving the following March into the West End at St. Martins Theatre, with an L.P of the show issued by H.M.V.

Appearing in 'Cranks' gave Annie the chance to develop her comedienne skills, something she also displayed on the radio series 'Back with Braden', starring Bernard Braden with Benny Lee, Franklyn Boyd and the Nat Temple Band, broadcast from April 1956.

When in November 'Cranks' crossed the Atlantic to open in New York she went too. Unfortunately, being of a particular British humour, it wasn't a success over there closing after only three weeks and losing its backers £20,000. Annie chose to stay in New York doing cabaret and TV work and from September 1957 was appearing with Blossom Dearie's group The Martins at the Upstairs Room.

It was about a year later that she joined up with Dave Lambert and Jon Hendricks forming the highly individual vocal trio Lambert, Hendricks and Ross. Using a wordless vocal style the trio preformed many of Count Basie's orchestra pieces, recording some of them on the Roulette album 'Sing a Song of Basie' (issued in UK on H.M.V. CLP1203). Backed by Basie's rhythm section they used multi-tracking of their voices to perform the brass and reed sections. Further similar L.P's followed and the group continued, to much public acclaim, into the early sixties. But Annie had left before the end, replaced by Ceylon born Yolande Bavan.

On the Vogue record label the trio appeared as The Swingers. Annie also recorded for Vogue with the Gerry Mulligan Band on the album 'Annie Ross Sings a Song with Mulligan' (LAE12203) and various jazz groups on 'A Gasser' (LAE12233). American 'Billboard' magazine in 1960 voted her "most promising female jazz singer".

By 1962 Annie was back in Scotland resting, recovering from nervous exhaustion. She then began working the UK jazz clubs, often with the Tony Kinsey Quintet and was performing at the 1963 Edinburgh Festival. She was the star attraction at the London club Annie's Room during 1963 and '64. John Barry produced an Ember album of her singing 'A Handful of Songs' (NR5008), backed by the Johnny Spence Orchestra.

On 19th August 1963 Annie married actor Sean Lynch at Paddington Register Office.

On television she appeared in her own ABC-TV show 'The World of Annie Ross', while on stage she played leading roles in the musical 'Three at Nine' at the London Arts Theatre in 1962, 'Wham Bam! Thank You Ma'am' at the Comedy Theatre in 1963 and 'The Stiffkey Scandals of 1932' at Queens Theatre in 1969.

Continuing to work both sides of the Atlantic she toured again with Jon Hendricks in 1970. She did a number of one woman shows and began concentrating on acting, appearing on the stage and in films. She had a sizable role, playing a

night club singer, in the highly praised 1993 film 'Short Cuts'.

Annie, by then a widow, made a number of appearances at Pizza on the Park, a popular music venue near Marble Arch, during 1995 and 1996.

		Annie Ross Recordings	
ESQUIRE			
10-334	Dec 53	'Twisted / Annie's lament'	
		PARLOPHONE (with Jack Parnell band)	
R 3870	Jun 54	'Annie's blues' (reverse vocal by Dennis Hale)	
		DECCA (with Tony Crombie band)	
F 10514	Apl 55	The fish / Mama, he treats your daughter mean'	
F 10637	Oct 55	'I want you to be my baby / Three little words'	
F 10680	Jan 56	'Only you / Cry me a river'	
		VOGUE POP (as a member of The Swingers)	
V 9158	Mar 60	'Love makes the world go round / Jackie'	
EMBER			
EMB 182	Nov 63	'Bye bye blues / A lot of livin' to do'	

David ROSS

A familiar name on Woolworth's Embassy label during the latter fifties, David Ross was believed to have been Ross McManus who for fourteen years during the latter fifties and almost all of the sixties was vocalist with the Joe Loss Orchestra. Only problem is McManus, well into his eighties claimed he never recorded for Embassy.

EMBASSY		David Ross Recordings	
WB 201	Sept 56	'Glendora / More' (<i>acc by Ken Jones orch</i>)	
WB 209	Oct 56	'The green door / Happiness street' (<i>K.J orch</i>)	
WB 219	Jan 57	'The garden of Eden / Singing the blues'	
		<i>(acc by Johnny Gregory orch)</i>	
WB 230	Mar 57	'Young love / Don't forbid me' (<i>K.Jones orch</i>)	
WB 236	May 57	'Butterfly / They call it a teenage crush'	
WB 241	Jun 57	'Ninety nine ways / I'm walking'	
WB 247	Jly 57	'Love letters in the sand / School day'	
		<i>(acc by Johnny Gregory orch)</i>	
WB 252	Sep 57	'Diana / Last train to San Fernando'	
WB 257	Oct 57	'Wanderin' eyes / Chances are'	
WB 261	Nov 57	'Wake up little Susie / Be my girl' (<i>acc by Johnny Gregory orch</i>)	
WB 265	Nov 57	'He's got the whole world in his hands / I love you baby'	
		ORIOLE	
CB 1416	Jan 58	'Everybodys got a girl but Tino / Pitter patter	

boom boom'

Harry ROY

Born in London on 12th January 1900, Harry Roy had already proved himself as a popular sax-clarinnet player and bandleader during the twenties and thirties. That's not to say we should dismiss him from the period of this work for he continued to entertain us throughout the fifties and sixties. I use the word entertain deliberately, because Harry wasn't just a musician and bandleader, he was a performer with a bright and breezy personality much bigger than his diminutive size, filling his stage shows with not just good music but plenty of fun as well.

Expected to make a career in business, he had several office jobs before joining the family firm, The City Box Manufacturing Company. The First World War had just ended when saxophone playing Harry joined piano playing elder brother Sydney in his band The Darnswells, enjoying limited success playing at the Fitzroy Galleries in Oxford Street. Later they changed the name to The Critchton Lyricals and later still to just The Lyricals and with each change so their popularity increased, playing venues like the Hammersmith Palais and Cafe de Paris. In 1928 they toured South Africa and Australia and in 1930 Germany. All these bands had been led by Syd Roy, but in 1930 they decided to go their own ways with Sydney eventually becoming a successful music publisher and Harry's manager.

Harry went on to lead a small group at London's Bat Club, but his big break came in 1931 when R.K.O. Pictures asked him to form an orchestra to open at their new Leicester Square Theatre. Appearing in variety shows between the films The R.K.Olians, as the band was called, soon made a name for themselves and for Harry as leader. With such excellent musicians as saxist Nat Temple, drummer Joe Daniels and at two pianos Ivor Moreton and Dave Kaye, how could they fail? Harry's first recordings had been with Syd's Lyricals in 1927. While at the Bat Club, as Harry Roy and his New Lyricals, he recorded two sides for Parlophone plus further sides for Oriole. The R.K.Olians began recording for the Broadcast label in October 1931, with Harry adding his own inimitable high pitched vocal to many of the songs.

Over the next couple of years the band toured in variety, including a season at the London Palladium and in 1933 Harry became resident leader at the Cafe Anglais, later moving over to the prestigious May Fair Hotel. During this time the band's regular Friday evening broadcasts became a must for lovers of good entertaining dance music.

A measure of Harry's popularity can be judged by the thousands of fans that turned up for his August 1935 wedding to Princess Pearl at London's Caxton Hall. This was a step into the upper echelons of society for Harry, the 'Princess' being Elizabeth Brooke, beautiful daughter of Sir Charles Vyner Brooke, the White Rajah of Sarawak. Elizabeth and Harry appeared together in two films 'Everything Is Rhythm' in 1936 and 'Rhythm Racketeer' the following year.

On 29th October 1935 the band appeared before King George V and Queen Mary at the Royal

Command Performance. During 1936 they played a season in George Black's revue 'All Alight at Oxford Circus' at the London Palladium with Flanagan & Allen, doing four shows a day. In April 1938 they set off on a four month tour of South America, taking along as vocalist 18 year old platinum blonde glamour girl Wendy Clare. Paid twice as much as they got in England, they certainly earned it doing six or seven shows a day, often dashing back and forth between theatres twenty or thirty miles apart.

Harry always well looked after his players and this is demonstrated by the fact that they hardly changed throughout the whole of the 1930's. One major change was when Ivor Moreton and Dave Kaye went off to do their own thing as a variety act during 1936. Harry replaced them on pianos with another excellent duo Stanley Black and Norman Yarlett, who he renamed Norman White, referring to them as Black and White.

All through the decade the records kept coming, from 1932 on the Parlophone label, many in the ragtime style that Harry was so fond of (his signature tune was 'Bugle call rag'). From the mid-thirties there were also sides from Harry Roy's Tiger-Ragamuffins, being just the two pianos with bass and drums. Vocalists on disc included his wife Elizabeth, Bill Currie, Ivor Moreton and Ray Ellington (who replaced Joe Daniels on drums), but by far the majority were from the boss himself. Many tunes were his own composition, he wrote well over seventy, many in ragtime including 'Piccadilly rag', 'Struttin' in the Strand', 'Times Square rag', 'The Roy rag' and 'Raggin' the rags'.

Arriving back from South Africa the end of August 1938, within a week Harry and the band were back on the road in a new show beginning with a week at Portsmouth Hippodrome, followed by the London Palladium where they shared the limelight with another great act, the three mighty Peters Sisters.

During the war years the band toured extensively at home and abroad for ENSA, using vocalists that included Julie Dawn, Marjorie Kingsley and Kay Harding. After the war Harry had a spell at the Millroy Club before returning to the road in variety. He continued to record, now for Decca, but on radio he seemed forgotten. Life with Elizabeth wasn't going too well either and they divorced in 1947. There had been two children Roberta and David. The following year, on 4th July, he married twenty seven year old Sonia Stackpoole, in a much quieter wedding. Sonia was an ex-Windmill dancer who had sung with the band and they remained together until he died.

Drummer Ray Ellington left early in 1947 to form his very successful Quartet. Young Basil Kirchin filled in for a while before Johnny Rolands took over. During the summer the band featured at the Astor Club, before setting off on a new variety tour beginning at New Cross Empire on 1st September 1947, Harry re-introduced his popular double piano format with his current pianist Hearne Lewis being joined by Norman Yarlett, who had successfully partnered Stanley Black before the war. Violinist Maurice Sterndale, who was also something of a comedian, joined Marjorie Kingsley in the vocal department. The road-show, that took them to theatres all over

the country, ran well into 1948. During the run, singer Eve Lombard replaced Marjorie Kingsley.

On 8th February 1948 the band made their first studio broadcast in over a year, on 'Band Parade'. Harry had always been an outspoken critic of the BBC and their policy towards dance bands. After his regular airings throughout a long spell at the May Fair Hotel during the thirties, he only got a handful of broadcasts. But when he did they were an occasion not to be missed, as respected drummer and 'Melody Maker' reviewer Maurice Burman once said "Many bands could go on air without their leader and there would not be a great deal of difference, but a Harry Roy Band broadcast is most emphatically Harry Roy".

On 24th February 1949 there was a big party to celebrate Harry's return to the West End, when he began a twelve month residency, leading a 15 piece, back at the Cafe Anglais. Vocalists were Cyril Shane and Eve Lombard. A high spot of the evening was Harry's duets with Adelaide Hall.

On Boxing Night 1949 the band made another of its rare broadcasts on a two hour show that also included the outfits of Sydney Lipton and Edmundo Ros. Relations with the BBC were obviously looking up, for he was back on air again Easter Monday with his own show 'Hurray for Roy'.

In April 1950 Harry began something quite different for him, a residency at one of Mecca's ballrooms. But not just any ballroom, this was the Lyceum in the Strand. The band appeared live on BBC TV when the British Formation Dancing Trophy competition was staged there during September. Contracted to Mecca for three years, a disagreement over musical policy ended the association by the New Year. Not that he hadn't been a great success, Chris Hayes writing in the Melody Maker voted him a hit saying that with vocalists Eve Lombard and Johnny Green, Harry had certainly given dancers their money's worth. But many fans wanted more of the old style ragtime-Roy and this didn't go down too well with management.

1951 saw Harry back in West End's clubland, at the Crystal Room of the Empress Club for a six month run. A period of private bookings plus a few variety weeks led to another first for Harry a resident seaside summer season, at Bridlington for 14 weeks from 23rd June 1952. The booking had originally been intended for Oscar Rabin, but he had to turn it down on health grounds. It was about this time that Eve Lombard, who had been with the band many years, left to go solo. Vocalists during the summer were Margaret Bond, Judy Allen and Barry Kent. As soon as this season was over Harry returned to touring with a new band show that included lots of comedy.

The summer of 1953 brought another new experience for Harry when he signed on for a season at Butlin's Filey Holiday Camp. A new girl singer, who Harry named Jane Russell (she had previously been with Roy Fox as Janet Webster) joined another newcomer Stuart Gordon. In September the band opened at London's Copacabana Club, staying until the following February. Harry also made a few broadcasts where his humorous announcements continued to prove just what a great showman he was.

With businessman Arthur Walls, Harry entered into a new venture to acquire a chain of

ballrooms opening with his band at the first, Wembley Majestic, in May 1954, later handing over to the resident Ed Nichols group that included a young Kenny Lynch on vocals. Once again what began with cheers ended in tears when Harry and Walls parted company later in the year. No doubt Harry lost money, he usually did.

Returning to one night stands and club work he led a quartet during the winter of 1954 at the Cafe de Paris. During 1955 returning to Mecca, bookings took him to Streatham Locarno Stork Club with a five piece during August, followed by two weeks holiday relief for Oscar Rabin at the Strand Lyceum. September found him spending a week at Bristol's Glen Ballroom before returning to Streatham Stork Club for a season.

Harry was now fronting a Quintet comprising Tommy Watt on piano, Teddy Broughton bass, Jack Peach drums and Danny Fisher guitar. From 28th November 1955 he was leading the resident group at London's Gargoyle Club, of which he was said to be part owner.

Back in media favour Harry made his commercial TV debut on Thursday 22nd December 1955 in a Jack Hylton hour long special. On Christmas Eve the band had their own programme on the Home Service and on Boxing Day was on BBC TV's 'Cabaret Matinee' with The Kentones vocal group and comedian Tom Mennard.

1955 was also the year he made a recording come-back on the Oriole label, his first discs in three years, with a seasonal offering 'The little Laplander', plus 'Permutation rag', 'A little boys prayer' and 'Steam heat'. Vocals were by his current singer Joan Anderson, The Londonaires a group led by bass player Teddy Broughton and The Four of Diamonds led by Tin Pan Alley personality Max Diamond. 'The little Laplander' was chosen as Radio Luxembourg "record of the week" and played every evening from Monday 19th December 1955, giving Harry valuable publicity.

Early 1956 Harry bought the New Hollywood Club in Quebec Street, Marble Arch and renamed it Harry Roy's Femina Club, appearing with a small group there and also at the Cafe de Paris. But in 1957 he was back with Mecca playing the winter season at Leeds Locarno, then returned to town to lead a 12 piece at Tottenham Royal, with Doris Steele on vocals. He was filling in as holiday relief at Streatham Palais during June, before being sent out into the wilderness of Edinburgh's Fountainbridge Ballroom. This was a far cry from those heady days when the Harry Roy Band was the talk of London town.

But all was not lost, on 23rd February 1959 a big celebrity gathering was at the May Fair Hotel to witness the return of Harry Roy to the scene of his former glories. He opened there with a five piece in the Candle Light Room, staying until 1962.

During the sixties Harry embarked on another expensive failure, buying a club in Bond Street that never made money and finally closed after a disastrous fire. He then led small groups in hotels and theatres, between periods of unemployment.

His final triumph came in 1969, a twelve week booking at the newly re-opened Sherry's Dixieland Bar in Brighton. Billed as Frantic Harry

Roy and his Dazzling Dixie Band, with singer Jackie Knight, he was a knock out, a fitting encore for a great performer.

Harry died suddenly on 1st February 1971 aged 71. A man who once earned thousands a week, he was virtually penniless when he died. His widow Sonia died in December 1996.

Harry Roy Recordings from 1945

vocalists where known are HR = Harry Roy - EK = Edna Kaye -

DC = Dorothy Carless - HK = Harry Kaye - EL = Eve Lombard -

EW = Eric Whitley - JG - Johnny Green - BK = Barry Kent

DECCA

F 8497 Jan 45 'Barrel house boogie / It had to be you'

PARLOPHONE

F 2079 Jun 45 'The last waltz of the evening (v. EK) /

Candy (v. HR)'

F 2083 Jly 45 'You moved right in (v. HR & EK) / Let's wait until

tomorrow (v. EK)'

F 2088 Aug 45 'Don't take your love from me (v. DC) / Bell bottom

trousers (v. HR)'

F 2090 Sep 45 'I should care / I'd rather be me (both v. DC)'

F 2100 Nov 45 'Manana (v. HK) / The gipsy (v. EL)'

F 2107 Dec 45 'Chirpy as a cricket (v. HR) / Under the willow

tree (v. EL)'

F 2115 Feb 46 'Out of the night (v. HK) / I'd do it all over

again (v. EL)'

F 2121 Feb 46 'On the Atchison Topeka and the Santa Fe (v. EL) / No can do

(v. HR)'

F 2126 Mar 46 'A gander on a meander / Southpaw special'

F 2136 Apl 46 'Waiting for the train to come in (v. HR) /

Promises (v. EL)'

F 2141 May 46 'When the gang meet again (v. HK) / Kiss me hello (v.

EL & HR)'

F 2149 Jun 46 'Knees up mother Brown (v. chorus) / The Lambeth

walk (v. HK)'

F 2150 Jun 46 'Well of all people (v. EW) / Make mine music (v.

HK & EW)'

F 2156 Jly 46 'Bobby sock bounce / Cynthia's in love

(v. EW)'

(following two discs are re-issues of 1930's recordings)

F 2350 Apl 49 'Twelfth Street rag / Temptation rag'

F 2364 Jly 49 'Bugle call rag / Wabash blues (The Tiger

Ragamuffins)'

F 2387 Oct 49 'Leicester Square rag (v. JG) / Original

Dixieland one step'

F 2391 Dec 49 'Sensation rag / Jazz me blues'

DECCA

F 8773 Jun 47 'Imaginez (v. EW) / Guilty (v. EL)'
 F 8790 Sep 47 'Come what may / Pall Mall walk'
 F 8802 Sep 47 'Daughter daughter / The re-bop bob

(both v. EL)

F 8842 Feb 48 (with Anne Shelton) 'Down at the Old Bull &

Bush /

Lover man'

F 8849 Mar 48 'When the rain is all rained out (v. The Song

Pedlars) / Sitting

on edge'

F 8884 May 48 'Canadian capers / Piano madness - Chinatown my

Chinatown'

F 8896 Jun 48 'There ought to be a society (v. Joy Nichols) /

Sambina'

F 8924 Jly 48 Temptation rag / Darktown strutters ball

(v. HR & The

Keynotes)

F 9125 May 49 'Park Lane blues / Blues in Mayfair'

F 9145 Jun 49 'Leicester Square rag / That

mysterious rag'

F 9348 Feb 50 'Election rag / Piccadilly rag'

F 9363 Mar 50 'You made me care (v. JG) /

Open the door polka (v.

HR & EL)

F 9450 Jly 50 'Struttin' in the Strand (v. HR & EL & JG) /

You're my

baby (v. HR)

F 9485 Sep 50 'Simple melody / He'd have to get under, get

out and get under (both v. JG & The

Keynotes)

F 9607 Feb 51 'The little old clock (v. JG & EL) /

Lily of Laguna (v. JG & Maurice

Sterndale)

F 9610 Mar 51 'After you get what you want (v. HR) /

Saloon bar rag (v. HR &

Hearne Lewis)

NIXA

NY 7761 Mar 52 'Flirtation waltz / Undecided (v. BK)

NY 7762 Mar 52 'The rhythm rag (v. BK) / The ole

Virginny rag'

NY 7763 Jun 52 'Echo rag (v. BK) / Cross hands

boogie'

NY 7764 Jun 52 'Please Mr. Sun (v. BK) / Bermuda'

ORIOLE

CB 1313 Nov 55 'The little Laplander / Permutation rag (v. The

Londonairs)

CB 1315 Nov 55 'Steam heat (v. Jean Anderson) / A little boys

prayer (v. Four of

Diamonds)

In October 1969 Harry conducted the studio orchestra on a David

Frost TV show, accompanying singer Tiny Tim. A live recording

from the show was issued on Reprise Records as follows

REPRISE

27004 Nov 69 (with Tiny Tim) 'There'll always be an England

/ Bless 'em all / It's a long way

to Tipperary'

Lita ROZA

Lita, possibly best remembered for her years with the Ted Heath orchestra, also had a long solo career that was still on-going in the 1990's. She made numerous recordings and of the few that made it onto the charts, one reached the top.

Born Lillian Patricia Roza on 14th March 1926, one of seven children living in a small Liverpool terraced house, she always dreamed of being on the stage and famous. Her father Frank, of Spanish descent, was a marine engineer who played piano and accordion in clubs in the evenings and was a source of inspiration for young Lita. Always active (a schoolgirl diving champion) she took to dancing at an early age and when only eleven years old, without her parents knowledge, auditioned for the chorus in a pantomime. She was accepted and when she broke the news to mum and dad they were at first full of congratulations, until learning the juvenile troop was to appear a hundred miles away at Norwich. But proud of their daughter they decided that as part of a group she would be safe and let her go. The following winter Lita was in panto again, but this time in her home town.

Not long after leaving school, and still determined to make show business a career, she gained a place with the chorus of the London show 'Black Velvet' that starred Ted Ray and Jill Manners. Unfortunately before long, Lita's mother decided wartime London to be too dangerous for her daughter, so back home she came.

Various jobs followed, as diverse as working in an overall factory, a pram shop, a delivery girl for a gown shop and packing butter for the Home & Colonial Stores. All this time she dreamed of returning to her dancing career until, an accident with some broken glass resulted in a cut leg that needed fifteen stitches, leaving a visible scar.

In 1942 determined to overcome this further setback, although she had never before sung in public, Lita auditioned at The New Yorker restaurant in nearby Southport for an advertised job as vocalist. She sang 'Moonlight becomes you' and somewhat to her surprise was taken on, at £5 a week (at the time the butter packing was paying 21 shillings (£1.05p)).

Inspired by this success in less than a year she had overcome her mother's objections and, with her savings of £8 in her pocket, headed back to the bright lights of London town. Lita, who was only sixteen, went to stay with the family in Kingston where she had digs while appearing in 'Black Velvet'. Knowing nobody in London, she went round the booking agencies looking for work and was soon signed up by the Harry Roy Organization.

Opening with Harry's band at Coventry Hippodrome in August 1943 she replaced singer Renee Lester, who later turned up again as a fifties vocal rival under the name of Suzi Miller. Lita toured with Harry until January 1944 when his band left on an E.N.S.A. tour of the Middle East and as Lita's brother, an air-gunner in the R.A.F had recently been killed in action her mother, understandably, didn't want her travelling abroad.

Staying in London, Lita did a short variety tour with Edmundo Ros and his band and some club bookings. It was while she was singing with Art Thompson's Band at the Embassy Club, that she

met a young American serviceman, James Holland Jnr. and within a few weeks, still only 18 years old and perhaps in a rebellious mood, she married him and left for the States. Lita was in fact one of the very first G.I. Brides to leave this country.

In America her husband, quite a wealthy man with his own flying business specialising in crop spraying, was, by nature of the work, away from home a lot. Missing him, and also all the excitement of performing, Lita became bored. So she looked for work and did a season singing with the Tony Lopez Band in Miami. Her husband was much against her continuing in show business, but she went on to do another season; this time with the Buddi Satan Trio and eventually the marriage broke up.

Considering a return to Britain, she paved the way by sending bandleader Ted Heath a request for an audition, enclosing photos and a demo recording. Ted of course was interested; she was an attractive young lady with a great voice. Reg Owen, a friend from her Embassy Club days, put in a few good words for her too. So in January 1950 en-route to her parents home and younger sister Alma's 21st birthday celebrations, Lita made a detour to Stoke-on-Trent to meet Ted at the North Stafford Hotel where he was staying before appearing with his band at nearby Trentham Gardens.

Ted invited her to come and see him in London and audition with the band. Consequently, on Sunday 12th February 1950, at one of the Heath band's London Palladium Swing Sessions, Lita walked on to that famous stage with poise and confidence, as 'Melody Maker' reviewer Jack Marshall put it "she swept on stage with the aplomb of an assured show-stopper and duly stopped the show". Even Ted, not one to favour vocalists, especially female ones, was so impressed he signed her for further bookings on the spot. She was back at the Palladium the following Sunday and appeared with the band at Hammersmith Palais later in the month. During the following weeks she appeared with the Heath band at Sheffield and Manchester.

The press also began to notice Lita, although the 'Musical Express' reported her as being "a sensational new coloured singer back from appearances in America" and the variety trade paper 'Performer' reported her as "a new American singer". But never mind she was being seen and noted and this audience was greatly increased late February when she appeared on BBC television's 'Picture Page', accompanied by pianist Steve Race who predicted, "a great future for this new singer in the Sarah Vaughan - Ella Fitzgerald mould".

In April 1950 Lita opened in cabaret at the exclusive Orchid Room and on Sunday 9th April, was back on the Heath Swing Session, becoming virtually a regular from here on. During the summer she appeared with the band at the Spa Ballroom, Torquay and in September she was singing with the Ralph Sharon group at Feldman's Club. She continued to make regular appearances at Ted Heath concerts and this soon became a full time commitment.

In mid 1951 her recording with the Heath band of 'Allentown Jail' became a big seller rivalling the American Jo Stafford version (in fact Jo was being

referred to as the American Lita Roza). More recordings followed including highlights like 'Blacksmith blues', 'High noon' (picked by reviewer Laurie Henshaw as superior to both the Frankie Laine and Tex Ritter versions), 'That's-a-why' (a duet with Dennis Lotis) and 'Legend of the well' a number from the pens of Ted's wife Moira and arranger Laurie Johnson. As record sales lists didn't arrive in Britain until the end of 1952, none of these were chart hits, but Lita's popularity was such she was voted top female singer in a 1952 'Melody Maker' reader's poll, well ahead of Cleo Laine who came second.

On Saturday 26th April 1952 she broadcast on 'In Town Tonight' before making a quick car dash to Ramsgate (she had missed the train) to appear with the Heath Band. The following day they were all back in London for the Melody Maker Poll Winners concert at the Empress Hall. Still able to freelance she was on air again on 28th May in the Midland Region's 'Melody Magazine' singing with the Arthur Rowberry Orchestra.

Early in 1953 she was encouraged to record 'That doggie in the window' a Stateside number one hit for Patti Page. Not much liking the song she was reluctant, but agreed. Issued in March it went straight in at No.9 giving Lita her first chart entry and by mid April had reached the number one position, leaving Patti trailing at No.9. After which she vowed never to sing the song again and as far as I'm aware never did.

Lita recorded two songs as the voice of Margaret Lockwood, playing a singer who can't stop laughing, in the 1953 film 'Laughing Annie'. Titles were 'I've fallen in deep water' and 'The world is mine tonight' which Philips later released on disc, but sung by Lockwood! Lita recorded 'Love is a beautiful stranger' for the sound-track of the Ginger Rogers film 'Beautiful Stranger' and played a night club singer in the 1955 Dirk Bogarde, Margaret Lockwood thriller 'Cast a Dark Shadow'.

Still on the road with the Heath band her popularity just continued to rise and rise. She was voted top female singer by readers of the 'Melody Maker' and 'New Musical Express' year after year, so it was no surprise in early 1954 that she decided to leave the relative security of the band and pursue a solo career. Unfortunately, she was unable to make her planned farewell appearance with Ted Heath, scheduled to be a Sunday concert at Edmonton Regal on 2nd May 1954. She had collapsed on a Heath broadcast the previous Tuesday and was under doctor's orders to rest.

Opening her first solo week of variety on Monday 17th May 1954 (a week late due to her still being unwell) at the Portsmouth Theatre Royal, she was topping a bill that included comics Arthur Haynes and Freddie Sales. Lita was the first female singer to top a variety bill since the war. Having previously been adopted 'pin-up girl' by the crew of H.M. Submarine Trespas & Alliance, the location and timing was fortunate, as the sub was in Portsmouth at the time. Lita invited its crew to the show and backstage after.

For the next twelve months it was non stop touring in the show 'Rhythm Is Their Business', until June 1955 when she collapsed during a performance at Dover. It was sheer exhaustion. She hadn't taken a real break for four years, but

in no time she was back on the road in a variety package including the Ray Ellington Quartet. Lita could be heard on Radio Luxembourg with the Con Bernard Quintet on a series sponsored by Horace Bachelor's InFraDraw pools winning formula and later in the year the Melody Maker sponsored series 'My Song for You'. She appeared on TV in shows like 'Off the Record', 'In Show Band Style' and 'Star Bill' and on 22nd October 1955 made her first appearance on the new commercial television channel on ATV's 'Music Shop' introduced by Gerry Wilmot. There were more records, ten in 1954 alone, popular songs like 'Ebb tide', 'Bell bottom blues', 'Secret love', 'The mama doll song' and many others. Her June 1955 recording 'The man in a raincoat', a plaintive tune, had some good solo trumpet by ex-fiancé Ronnie Hughes whom she had met while both were working for Ted Heath and since 1952 had had an on / off romance. In October 1955 her second chart entry, 'Hey There' from the musical 'The Pajama Game' reached No.17.

In March 1956 Lita went off to America for club appearances, but in April was back in London appearing at the Palladium for two weeks in one of the then currently popular all music variety shows. This one starred Billy Daniels with Eve Boswell, Dennis Lotis, Teddy Johnson & Pearl Carr and The Kaye Sisters.

On Saturday 5th May 1956 Lita and Ronnie were finally married, it was leap year and she had proposed, even buying the ring herself in America.

From Wednesday 27th June 1956 Lita starred in her first big summer season show, 'Holiday Parade' at the Garrick Theatre, Southport. Hoping to integrate into some of the comedy sketches she was disappointed when all she had was a solo spot at the end. Unable to change the promoter's policy she left the show early at the beginning of August.

She wasn't out of work long though, for the week commencing Monday 13th August found her at Swansea Empire with Issy Bonn and comedy duo Earl & Vaughan. Several more weeks in variety followed until September when Lita took a well earned rest, off with husband Ronnie and sister Alma on a motoring tour of the Continent. Lita always had a weakness for fast cars.

Although she had been busy most of the year on the variety stage, there had still been time for radio and T.V. This included 'Northern Showground' a live television presentation of summer season acts transmitted from Blackpool during July, ITV's 'Startime' with Al Martino in August and several appearances on T.V. pop shows like 'Off the Record', The 'Jack Jackson Show' and first of a new I.T.V. series 'Fan Club' in November. Lita also appeared on a 'special' from the Park Lane Hotel celebrating the first birthday of commercial television on 21st September 1956, strangely titled 'Production 38 / 135'.

There were more records including 'Jimmy Unknown' released in January 1956, giving Lita her third and last chart entry, reaching No.15. Other notable songs were 'Too young to go steady', 'The last waltz' and 'Hey jealous lover'. By now L.P's were becoming more widely available and Lita recorded hers, 'Listening In the After Hours'.

Christmas 1956 found Lita entertaining the troops on a tour of Cyprus and Malta military bases. Arriving home mid January she was on ITV's 'Jack Jackson Show' on Sunday 20th, BBC TV's 'Festival of British Popular Song' on the 22nd, radio's 'Variety Playhouse' on the 27th and BBC TV's 'Off the Record' on the 4th February.

On 2nd March 1957 she was on screen in an ITV musical play 'The Girl Friend' adapted from an original show that ran at London's Palace Theatre in 1927 and introduced to the public the songs 'Mountain Greenery' and 'The Blue Room'. With Lita on the show were Dennis Lotis, Gerald's Orchestra and a young dancer, Lionel Blair. Reviews rated Lita a great success "proving she can act and is not just a variety singer".

Variety included two weeks in March at London's Prince of Wales Theatre sharing top billing with ex-boss Ted Heath. She spent weeks at towns as far apart as Glasgow, Liverpool, Llandudno, Coventry, Bridlington, Croydon and Blackpool, appearing alongside artists including Jimmy Edwards and David Whitfield. And to close the year she went right back to her roots and appeared in pantomime, playing the title role in 'Aladdin' for three weeks at Gloucester Regal Theatre from 23rd December, followed by two weeks at York Rialto. Her sister, singer Alma Warren, was also in the show.

During 1957 Lita made only a few recordings, her last on the Decca label, including a version of Ruth Brown's American hit 'Lucky Lips'. By November she had signed with Pye.

Television during the year had been mainly record shows like the popular Jack Jackson offering on Sunday afternoons. Lita joined rocker Terry Dene on the last of this series on the 5th January 1958, before Jack's show moved the following week to Saturday evenings in opposition to the BBC's 'Six Five Special'.

The closing years of the fifties were probably not the best for Lita. Her marriage to Ronnie Hughes had not lasted, and a possible tour of Australia was abandoned due to health problems. But nevertheless she could already look back on a long string of exceptionally good recordings and she did have a luxurious flat near Marble Arch that she shared with her tiny black poodle Tuppence. She also had a reported wardrobe of twenty fabulous gowns (most designed by Lita herself and made by Margaret Kerr, wife of Bill, of Hancock fame - all were designed to show off her tiny waist and silky smooth shoulders), two mink coats and sixty pairs of shoes. In the garage were two cars, a Riley Pathfinder and a Ford convertible, and on her fingers two large diamond rings (she called them her old age pension). Lita did bemoan the lack of good new songs around at the time though, and recorded less "because there just isn't any decent material". She was even willing to try rock and roll as there were no good ballads and her second Pye offering 'You're the greatest' was in that style.

Lita continued to refuse to tour America, although she had several offers; with her reason being that despite her having a long string of successful records she wouldn't be given star billing, while mediocre one-hit-wonder American singers came over here topping the bill at the Palladium.

One of Lita's Pye recordings was the popular 'Volare' with her version being different to most, labelled under the original Italian title 'Nel blu dipinto di blu' she sang it mostly in Italian. She also made a new recording of her big 1951 hit 'Allentown jail'. Her Pye output included the amusingly titled 1960 album 'Drinka Lita Roza Day' (her version of the Milk Marketing Board's slogan Drinka Pinta Milka Day) recorded live before an audience of regulars at the 'Prospect of Whitby' pub in Wapping.

With variety on the decline, stage appearances were mainly one night stands and cabaret bookings. In December 1958 she was back on home ground enjoying herself, playing Robin Hood in 'Babes in the Wood' with sister Alma as Maid Marion at Liverpool Pavilion Theatre. She also toured abroad more often, in February 1959 doing a month's cabaret at a plush Singapore Hotel and in April joined Ted Heath and his boys once again for several concerts in the Palace of Sport Stadium, Barcelona, Spain. During the summer she starred with comedian Reg Varney in 'Happy Go Lucky' at the King's Theatre, Southsea.

On Radio Luxembourg Lita was back with the old team of Dickie Valentine, Dennis Lotis and the Ted Heath Band on the series 'Toni Twins', sponsored by the Toni Home Perm Company. Other media exposure included ATV's 'Music Shop' and during January 1960 a short BBC TV series looking back to 'The Musical Fifties', that she shared with Adam Faith, Valerie Masters and The Polka Dots.

Live appearances, much being club work, could also often take her to unknown venues and one such occurred during December 1959 when she was booked for a week at the Fusiliers Arms Salford. Arriving on the Monday Lita discovered it was just an ordinary pub near Manchester docks. Accompaniment was just the battered old pub piano, but undeterred she gave the customers her full stylish act and at the end of the week said that despite her early doubts, she'd enjoyed it immensely. The regulars certainly did and landlord John Cairns said he booked her to "put his pub on the map" and it was well worth the £225 it cost him.

Early 1960 Lita still seemed to be doubtful about her future, her Pye contract was due for renewal but she turned it down, "the pop scene at the moment is just a shambles" she said. She was even dropping hints that she might leave Britain and settle in America. But a three month tour of Australia from 11th May must have cheered her. Playing a month each at Perth, Sydney and Melbourne she received excellent reviews.

Back home again she spent the winter playing cabaret at London clubs including the Pigalle, Quaglinos, the Satire and Jack of Clubs. She also finally overcame her earlier resistance and accepted an \$18,000 contract to appear at Las Vegas. And that's where she was heading late March 1961 for her opening night at the Flamingo Hotel Driftwood Lounge on Thursday 30th March, sharing the limelight with the Harry James Orchestra. One member of the audience cheering her on was Shirley Bassey, on her way home from appearing in Australia.

As the sixties wore on bringing in a changing music style, out of tune with most of the fifties

singers, it was certainly out of tune for Lita and a couple of mid-sixties singles for Columbia was probably her last recordings. Lita continued to play cabaret for a while, on the booming club circuit. But her finest moments were probably during the fifties, especially the great years with Ted Heath and his Music alongside those other fine singers Dickie Valentine and Dennis Lotis, a tradition she helped to keep going in later years as vocalist with a Heath tribute band led by trombonist Don Lusher. Other than that Lita spent most of the time quietly enjoying the comfort of her London home, something she missed while constantly on tour.

In March 2001 she was back in her home town of Liverpool, invited to unveil the 'Wall of Fame', created opposite the city's famous Cavern Club, to celebrate famous modern Scousers, of which Lita was one of the best. She died 14th August 2008.

			Lita Roza Recordings
	DECCA		
F 9381	Apl 50	(with Ted Heath Music & Jack Parnell)	
		'Didn't we'	
F 9422	Jun 50	(with THM & JP)	
		'Go to sleep, go to sleep, go	
		to sleep'	
F 9540	Nov 50	(with THM) 'My very good friend the	
		milkman'	
F 9620	Mar 51	(with THM) 'She's a lady (with JP &	
		Dennis	
		Lotis) / Take a letter Miss Smith	
		(with JP)	
F 9731	Jly 51	(with THM) 'Allentown Jail / I wish I	
		knew'	
F 9785	Nov 51	(with THM) 'I'm gonna wash that man	
		right	
		outa my hair / A	
		wonderful guy'	
F 9813	Dec 51	(with THM) 'Lullaby of Broadway /	
		Undecided'	
F 9845	Feb 52	'The legend of the well / When the	
		world	
		was young' (acc by Roland	
		Shaw Orch)	
F 9857	Feb 52	(with THM) 'It's all over but the	
		memories /	
		It's all in	
		the game'	
F 9885	Mar 52	(with THM) 'Somewhere in the	
		moonlight /	
		Come	
		what may'	
F 9911	Apl 52	(with THM) 'Blacksmith blues'	
F 9938	Jly 52	'High noon / Love where are you now '	
		(acc by Reg	
		Owen Orch)	
F 9948	Jly 52	'If someone had told me / Stars fell on	
		Alabama' (acc by	
		Mantovani Orch)	
F 9955	Jly 52	(with THM) 'Oakie boogie / Raminay'	
F 9958	Aug 52	(with THM) 'Blackpool bounce /	
		Meet me on	
		the corner'	
F 9980	Sep 52	(with THM) 'Botch-a-me / Early	
		autumn'	
F 9988	Oct 52	'Walking to Missouri / Half as much'	
		(acc by Johnny	
		Douglas Orch)	
F 9992	Oct 52	'Did you ever see a dream walking /	
		I went to	
		your wedding'	
F 10027	Nov 52	(with Dennis Lotis & Ted Heath Music)	
		That's-a-why / Setting the	
		woods on fire'	

F 10040 Jan 53	'Why don't you believe me / Hi-lili Hi-lo'	(acc by Johnny Douglas Orch)	F 10611 Sep 55	'Hey there / Hernando's hideaway'	(acc by Bob Sharples Music)
F 10049 Feb 53	(with DL & THM) 'Ma says, Pa says'		F 10679 Jan 56	'Jimmy unknown / The rose tattoo'	(acc by Bob Sharples Music)
F 10057 Feb 53	Take care of yourself / Tears' (acc by JDO)		F 10728 Apr 56	'Too young to go steady / You're not alone'	(acc by Bob Sharples Music)
F 10070 Mar 53	'That doggie in the window / Tell me we'll meet again (with The Peter Knight Singers)'	(acc by Johnny Douglas Orch)	F 10752 Jun 56	(part of All Star Hit Parade) 'A tear fell'	
F 10109 May 53	'Tell us where the good times are (with The Johnston Brothers) / Have you heard'	(acc by Johnny Douglas Orch)	F 10761 Jly 56	'But love me / No time for tears' (acc by BSM)	
F 10128 Jun 53	'No one will ever know (with The Johnston Bros) / Seven lonely days' (acc by JDO)		F 10792 Oct 56	'Innismore / The last waltz' (acc by BSM)	
F 10144 Aug 53	(with Ted Heath Music) 'Crazy man crazy / Oo! what you do to me'		F 10830 Dec 56	'Julie / Hey jealous lover'	(acc by Roland Shaw Orch)
F 10162 Sep 53	'Little Swiss doll / Hi lili Hi lo' (acc by JDO)		F 10861 Mar 57	'Lucky lips / Tears don't care who cries them'	(acc by Roland Shaw Orch)
F 10165 Sep 53	'Return to paradise / Butterflies' (acc by JDO)		F 10884 May 57	'Tonight my heart, she is crying / Five oranges, four apples' (acc by RSO)	
F 10175 Oct 53	P.S. I love you / Breaker of hearts' (acc by Johnny Douglas Orch)		F 10921 Jly 57	'I need you / You've changed (acc by RSO)	
F 10204 Nov 53	'The little boy that Santa Claus forgot / St. Nicholas waltz' (acc by JDO)			PYE NIXA	
F 10239 Jan 54	Ebb tide (acc by THM) / I was a fool in love (acc by JDO)		N 15119 Jan 58	'Ha ha ha / Pretend you don't see him'	
F 10240 Feb 54	'Changing partners / Just a dream or two ago (with The Stargazers)' (acc by JDO)		N 15133 Mar 58	'You're the greatest / I need somebody'	
F 10269 Feb 54	(with Ted Heath Music) 'Bell bottom blues / Make love to me'		N 15139 May 58	'I could have danced all night / The wonderful season of love' (acc by Bill Shepherd orch)	
F 10277 Mar 54	'Secret love / Young at heart' (acc by JDO)		N 15149 Jun 58	'Hillside in Scotland / Sorry sorry sorry' (with Beryl Stott Chorus acc by Bill Shepherd orch)	
F 10335 Jun 54	'Joey / Idle gossip' (acc by Roland Shaw Orch)		N 15155 Aug 58	'Nel blu dipinto di blu (Volare) / It's a boy' (with Beryl Stott Chorus acc by Bill Shepherd orch)	
F 10347 Jly 54	'Superstition / No one' (acc by JDO)		N 15190 Feb 59	'This is my town (acc by Peter Knight orch) / Oh dear what can the matter be (acc by Bill Shepherd orch)	
F 10356 Aug 54	'Smile / Love is a beautiful stranger' (acc RSO)		N 15204 May 59	'Allentown jail / Once in a while' (acc by Bill Shepherd orch)	
F 10363 Sep 54	'Skinnie Minnie (acc by JDO) / My kid brother (acc by Cyril Stapleton Orch)'		N 15241 Nov 59	'Let it rain let it rain / Maybe you'll be there' (acc by Wally Stott orch)	
F 10393 Nov 54	'The mama doll song / Call off the wedding' (acc by Johnny Douglas Orch)			EMBER	
F 10427 Dec 54	'Heartbeat / Leave me alone' (acc by JDO)		EMBS168 Oct 62	'Mama he treats your daughter mean / He's my dreamboat'	
F 10431 Jan 55	'Let me go lover / Make yourself comfortable' (acc by Johnny Douglas Orch)			COLUMBIA	
F 10479 Mar 55	'Tomorrow / Foolishly' (acc by JDO)		DB 7689 65	'Stranger things have happened / Keep watch over him'	
F 10536 Jun 55	'Two hearts two kisses / Keep me in mind' (acc by Al Timothy Band)		DB 7785 65	'What am I supposed to do / Where do I go from here'	
F 10541 Jun 55	'The man in the raincoat / Today and every day' (acc by Bob Sharples Music)				

Lynda RUSSELL

Born 1927 at North Harrow, Middlesex, singer Lynda got her first big break when she joined the Stardusters band in March 1947. A year later she was touring with the Vic Lewis orchestra, where she became engaged to trombonist Jimmy Wilson. By March 1949 Lynda had moved to the Tommy Sampson band, sharing the vocals with Terry Walsh. Later she was a member of both The Sapphires and Song Pedlars vocal groups and in the mid-fifties was vocalist with the Frazer Hayes Four.

Marion RYAN

A pocket sized 5ft. 2in. vivacious strawberry-blonde, Marion not only sounded good she looked very good too with her shapely 35-23-35 figure. Already a beauty competition winner around her home town of Middlesbrough, she probably had no difficulty catching Ray Ellington's eye at Leeds Locarno in 1953 when she asked to sing with his group. This had been a 'dare' from friends, but when Ray said "come back tomorrow" she did and he let her sing. The song was 'Embraceable you' and Ray was obviously impressed as he later remarked, "She sings like Marilyn Monroe looks". So for 21 year old Marion it was goodbye to her sales girl job in a local lingerie shop and hello show business, off on tour with the Ray Ellington Quartet. Her debut with the group was at Glasgow Locarno on Monday 24th August 1953 and by the time they arrived in London, at the Gaumont State Theatre, Kilburn during October, the musical press reported "a self assured professional performer - the non-stop applause demanding she come back on stage for an encore".

Marion's recording debut was in March 1954 on one of the Quartet's Columbia discs, and it reflected her continuing success in its title 'All's going well'. Being a comedy number it revealed her sense of humour as well.

There was a slight hiccup in her progress in July 1954 when she entered Wimpole Street Nursing Home for a throat operation. On its result hung the balance of her continuing a singing career, but all went well and throughout 1955 she continued her happy relationship touring with the Quartet.

The year also brought her a solo contract with the new Pye Nixa label, her first disc coupling the Rosemary Clooney song 'Sailor boys have talk to me in English' with 'Hard to Get' as featured by Gisele MacKenzie in the TV series 'Justice'. More cover versions followed like Julie London's 'Cry me a river' and 'Why do fools fall in love', a number one hit for Frankie Lymon.

Singing her solo numbers Marion popped up more than once on commercial television's early popular music series 'Music Shop' and the 'Jack Jackson Show'. But it was on ITV's long running quiz show 'Spot the Tune' that she was to make her biggest television impact. First transmitted in May 1956, Marion co-hosted until the series ended in 1962. It was a musical quiz in which contestants had to come up with the name of a song after hearing just a few bars played by the orchestra, originally directed by Peter Knight. With her incredible memory for song lyrics Marion was a natural for this game show, always able to supply the words to match any tune.

During the summer months of 1957 while 'Spot the Tune' took a break, Marion joined Glen Mason on a song and humour series titled 'Pay Attention'. She also made guest appearances on 'The Winifred Atwell Show' and 'The Jimmy Wheeler Show'.

To enable her to be available to fulfil all these increasing TV commitments, after almost four years touring with Ray Ellington she left, playing her last concert with the Quartet on the BBC's Festival of Dance Music at London's Royal Albert Hall on Tuesday 14th May 1957. She later said one of the most important things she learned from Ray was "never to believe your own good publicity - as you can very soon let it go to your head".

When time permitted Marion did still appear solo in variety, her first week being at Hanley Theatre Royal from Monday 1st July with old Quartet mate Dick Katz giving her the benefit of some first class piano accompaniment. A report of the show says "Marion in a £250 gown of lace and pink net stepped nervously on stage to a burst of applause and by the end of her first number, 'Zing went the strings of my heart', knew she had made it". At the end of her act she took three curtain calls. On Wednesday her own pianist Jeff Sanders took over so Dick could return to the Quartet. There then followed shows at Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham and Bradford. During July, again supported by Dick Katz, Marion made a quick tour of Germany and Holland, where one of her duties included judging a beer drinking contest! On Monday 26th August she made her London solo variety debut at Finsbury Park Empire. Later in the year she toured with Ronnie Hilton in the Cyril Stapleton Band Show.

During the winter months she made several appearances on 'Six Five Special' and Jack Jackson's television shows. Her record output continued with songs like 'Two innocent hearts', 'Mister Wonderful' and the jolly 'Ding dong rock-a-billy wedding. But it wasn't until February 1958 that she had her first and only chart hit when 'Love me forever' reached No.5. One of her other discs that year, 'The world goes round and around' in August, was advertised as Britain's first stereo single in its 45 rpm version. At the time she was in America appearing on Bob Hope's TV show, later transmitted over here by the BBC. On the 8th October 1958 she made her 100th appearance on Granada's 'Spot the Tune'.

Reported in 1959 to be the highest paid singer on TV, Marion's various contracts ensured that she was on-screen once or twice a week 36 weeks out of 52. She put some of this income to good use in buying her parents (her father was a crane driver) a new Swedish style home in Yorkshire. She did have more than one mouth to feed herself, for there were her twin sons from a previous failed marriage, Paul and Barry who were born in 1948. Later in the 1960's they were to enter the music profession, doing chartwise far better than their mother.

May 1959 saw the release of her first 12inch L.P. 'A Lady Loves'. On 23rd June she appeared on the out-of-town Royal Variety Show at Manchester's Palace Theatre. Marion was up north starring in George & Alfred Black's summer season 'Jubilee Show' at Blackpool's Palace Theatre with Roy Castle, The Dallas Boys and comics Joe Baker and

Jack Douglas.

As soon as the season was over she was back in a Harley Street clinic for another tonsil operation, the new voice getting its first outing with Johnny Dankworth's Orchestra at the newly re-furnished Brighton Palladium (formally a sports stadium) on Sunday 18th October. The following Wednesday she began another series of 'Spot the Tune'.

Wednesday 6th January 1960 turned out to be a busy day for Marion; first she signed a new two year record contract that saw her move to E.M.I. After lunch she recorded an edition of ITV's 'Chelsea at Nine', then made her usual evening appearance of 'Spot the Tune'. A couple of hours later she was back in the London Clinic, this time to have her appendix out.

Marion was on the Royal Variety Performance again in May 1960 and from 24th June co-starred with American comedian Orson Bean in the Granada TV series 'Two's a Crowd', that also featured singer Gary Marshall, The Grenadiers and Tony Osborne's Orchestra. She partnered another comedian when Ted Ray joined her as co-presenter of 'Spot the Tune' when it returned for another series in September.

Marion topped the bill with Harry Secombe for the London Palladium 1961 summer show 'Let Yourself Go' that opened on 19th May. This was her West End debut, and what a debut, thirteen shows a week for seven months. Also on the star-studded bill were Eddie Calvert, Roy Castle and The King Brothers. During November she recorded a TV show with Bing Crosby while he was filming over here, which was transmitted in the US on 11th December.

In March 1962 Marion began another new Granada series 'Take Five' and then 'Swing Along' with Des O'Connor and The King Brothers. September saw the start of the last series of 'Spot the Tune'. The format was revived by Thames TV in 1978 as part of its 'London Night Out' with Tom O'Connor. It later became a complete show 'Name That Tune' and dancer Lionel Blair took charge.

Marion was one of several pop artists who turned up in the 1963 Tommy Steele film 'It's all happening'. She was appearing in cabaret at places like London's Talk of the Town and Ilford's popular Room at the Top'. Her new lyrics to the song 'Let's do it' were reported as just the thing to thaw out an audience. Moving away from Granada territory she was more likely to be seen on ATV's 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium' and 'Big Night Out'. But she began working less having married show business agent Harold Davison, later moving with him to America. Marion died on 15th January 1999, aged 67.

Marion Ryan Recordings

COLUMBIA

DB 3420 Mar 54 (with R.Ellington Quartet) 'All's going well'

PYE NIXA

N 15002 Oct 55 'Sailor boys have talk to me in English /

Hard to get'

N 15018 Dec 55 'Cry me a river / Shoot it again'

N 15058 Jun 56 'Why do fools fall in love / Hot diggity' (acc by Bill

Shepherd orch)

N 15078 Jan 57 'Two innocent hearts / Miracle of love'

N 15091 May 57 'Mr.Wonderful / Chantez chantez'

N 15105 Sep 57 Ding dong rock-a-billy wedding / That's

happiness'

N 15121 Jan 58 'Love me forever / Make the man love me'

(acc by Peter

Knight orch)

N 15130 Feb 58 'Oh-oh I'm falling in love again /

Always and

forever' (acc by Bill

Shepherd orch)

N 15138 May 58 'Stairway of love / I need you'

N 15151 Jly 58 (with Gary Miller) 'A couple of crazy kids'

(acc by Bill

Shepherd orch)

N 15157 Aug 58 'The world goes round and around / Please

don't say goodnight (with Beryl

Stott Group)

(acc by Bill

Shepherd music)

N 15184 Feb 59 'Wait for me / Jeepers creepers' (acc by

Tony

Osborne orch)

N 15200 May 59 'Jo-Jo the dog faced boy / Doin' what comes

naturally' (acc by Bill

Shepherd orch)

N 15216 Aug 59 'Too much / Promise me' (acc by Peter

Knight orch)

COLUMBIA

DB 4448 May 60 'Sixteen reasons / Mangos'

DB 4550 Jan 61 'It's you that I love / Somebody'

DB 4674 Jly 61 'A thousand blue bubbles / I wish you love'

(acc by Geoff

Love orch)

DB 4857 Jly 62 'No love but your love / An occasional man'

PHILIPS

BF 1721 68 'Better use your head / The seasons change'

Shirley RYAN

An Australian, Shirley Ryan had sung with the Eddie Taylor Band at Moonee Ponds, Melbourne before coming to seek her fortune in Britain in the autumn of 1953. Looking for work here, she took the first job that came along and in November attractive 21 year old Shirley was singing with Tom Hunt and his Band at the Seaport Ballroom across the Irish Sea in Galway.

A month later she was touring with the Tito Burns Sextet and over the next eighteen months worked with the bands of Bobby Mickleburgh and Tony Kinsey. This she followed by playing several weeks in cabaret beginning 6th June 1955 at the Benelux Restaurant. Next came another trip over to Ireland, to Maxim's Club Belfast, then back for appearances at the Astor, Latin Quarter and Miramar clubs. On the 8th August she began a 12 week season at the New Churchill Club in Bond Street, doubling the first two weeks at La Ronde Restaurant.

Shirley made her TV debut here on AR-TV's 'Downbeat' on 27th December 1955. She began

Back in London she made several more cabaret appearances before boarding the liner Queen Elizabeth on 13th March 1957, off to the States. Disappointed at not making the big time here she was going to try again in America and Canada. At the end of March she opened at New York's Village Vanguard Club and appeared on Dean Martin's TV show on 25th May. During her few years in this country she is reported as testing for Columbia Records, but I don't know of any issue. She did record at least four sides for Melodisc, but once again I don't have full details.

? Jun 56 'Besame mucho / Ask for you'

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Formed by a group of jazz enthusiasts they first appeared at Manchester's Apollo Cinema and by 1949 were regulars at Levenshulme Palais de Dance. In 1950 they became the resident band of the newly formed Lancashire Jazz Society. Soon they became known wider afield from their broadcasts on 'Jazz Club'.

Clarinet playing Alan Radcliffe the band's leader with Mike McNamara (trumpet) and John Fish (piano) all hailed from Ashton-under-Lyne and had played in the Storyville Jazz Band before forming the Saints in 1949. The original Saints Jazz Band line up also included Ron 'Slim' Simpson (trombone), Jim Lolley (banjo) and John Mills (drums).

There were several personnel changes over the years. Fred Fydler replaced Simpson on trombone in 1952 and Bob Connell took over trumpet when McNamara left in 1959. Drummer John Mills died in 1960 and his place was taken by Merten Kaufman. Other changes continued through until the bands final engagement in 1982.

The Saints' early recordings are on the Decibel label, but the bulk of the band's output is on Parlophone, their first issue 'I want a girl just like the girl that married dear old dad' having been recorded at the NFJO Jazz Concert, attended by Princess Elizabeth at the Royal Festival Hall on 14th July 1951.

|1 50 'We shall walk through the streets /

When the saints go

|3 May 51 'Old Stack o' Lee blues / 1919 march'

R 3427	Sep 51	'I want a girl just like the girl that married dear	old dad' (<i>Crane River band</i>)
<i>on reverse)</i>			
R 3544	Jun 52	'When the saints go marching in / Savoy blues'	
R 3564	Aug 52	'Tiger rag / Milenberg joys'	
R 3586	Nov 52	'Stay out of the north (<i>v. Fred Fvdler</i>) /	

R 3751 Oct 53 'Who walks in when I walk out /
Hey Lawdy papa (v.

('The Angel' was blues singer Doreen Beatty)

R 4260 Jan 57 'Blue turning grey over you / Till we

R 4304 May 57 'How come you do me like you do? / Willie

R 4417 Mar 58 'Swingin' the blues / I've found a new baby'

R 4907	62	'Roses of Picardy / There'll be some
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changes made'

A towering six footer Mike, born 19th February 1928, came from Reigate where his father ran a photographic business. Having learned piano and cello while still at school, on leaving he went to work for music publisher Chappell & Co, until being called up for National Service. Afterwards he joined a local dance band, the Meltones, where a fellow member was Bill Shepherd and through him made contact with the George Mitchell Singers, eventually becoming a member. In Coronation Year 1953 Shepherd formed a splinter vocal group The Coronets with Mike as one of its members. When towards the end of the fifties Bill Shepherd decided he'd had enough, Mike and the other Coronets formed the core of the Michael Sammes Singers. Normally comprising three boys and three girls they did a lot of backing work for Embassy Records and also appeared on the label as The Tunettes. In fact they had much more work than they could handle working for other record labels, radio and television especially the very lucrative advertising jingles.

The Mike Sammes Singers continued to have a very rewarding career over the years backing artists that included Cliff Richard, Matt Monro and The Beatles and they recorded numerous LP's of show tunes. Their 1966 H.M.V. single 'Somewhere my love' had a brief appearance on the Top Twenty charts. They also recorded on Top Rank as the Knightsbridge Chorale. Mike died on 19th May 2001 aged 73.

H 159 Nov 58 'Heart of my heart / Heartaches'

H 179 Feb 59 'The old grey goose / The Kerry dance'
 H 232 Nov 59 'Little drummer boy / Comin' through the rye'

TOP RANK

JAR 166 Jly 59 'Upstairs and downstairs' (on one side only)

PYE

N 15395 Nov 61 'Stork talk / Till autumn comes'

ORIOLE

CB 1738 Jun 62 'Oh my twisted Bach / All of a twist'

COLUMBIA

DB 7004 63 (with Big Ben Banjo Band)
 'Brotherhood

of man / I

believe in you'
 H.M.V.

POP 1341 64 'There'll always be another spring / Limehouse blues'

POP 1546 66 'Somewhere my love / What do I do?'
 POP 1587 67 'Somebody's thinking of you tonight / Lace covered

window'
 POP 1598 67 'A man and a woman / What lies over the hill'

COLUMBIA

DB 8308 67 'Ring Christmas bells /
 Do you hear

what I hear'
 DB 8408 68 'Love is a happy thing /
 The penny

farthing song'
 DB 8490 68 'Scarborough fair / Because you are there'

DB 8631 69 'Hurry to me / Love me, love me'

DB 8870 72 'Out on the edge of beyond / Empty arms'

DB 9038 74 'Only your love / Operator hello hello'

Tommy SAMPSON

I originally found very little written about Tommy Sampson, other than during the late forties he was credited as leading one of this country's best big bands. A little bit of digging produced the following information.

From Edinburgh, the son of a director of a firm of road contractors Tommy, born in 1918, began playing the cornet when he was still just a toddler. It's reported the family were Salvation Army followers, so his musical skills may have originated there.

In 1939 Tommy joined the regular army and played in the RAOC band in Scotland prior to getting a commission. Taken prisoner by the Italians at Tobruk in 1942, during his three years in captivity he formed and led a POW dance band. Repatriated in 1945 he formed the Scottish Command Dance Orchestra that he led until his demob in June 1946.

In December 1946 Tommy began rehearsing a civilian band he had brought together and within a month had secured a resident booking at Leith Eldorado Ballroom in Edinburgh's dockland. This was no small group pretending to be something it

wasn't, but a full 18 piece power-house unit with an impressive line-up that included many young musicians later to rise to even greater heights.

Personnel were Tommy leading on trumpet, George Hunter, Jimmy Paxton (altos) Henry MacKenzie, Alan Davis (tenors) Jimmy Waugh (baritone) Stan Reynolds, Duncan Campbell, Frank Webb, Alex Macgregor (trumpets) Johnny Kirkwood, Ralph Hutchinson, Bill Paxton, Andy Young (trombones) Sam Harding (piano) Sammy Stokes (bass) Terry Walsh (guitar) Dougie Cooper (drums). Almost all arrangements were by Edwin Holland.

Soon rumours of this great band began percolating across the border eventually reaching as far south as London. By the summer of 1947 interest had grown to the extent that Tommy and the band were invited by agent Bill Elliott to come south and audition for the BBC and other interested parties.

Giving what was described as a "nothing short of sensational" performance one of the first results was a broadcast, not on the BBC, but over Radio Diffusion Francaise to Paris, from 11.15pm to midnight on 14th August. While in London the band is reported as making several private recordings at Levy's Studio.

With big things predicted the band left the confines of Leith Eldorado and set off on a nationwide tour of one-night-stands plus weeks at various ballrooms. They made some BBC broadcasts and on 9th August 1948 began a three month tour of service camps in Germany.

Early in 1949 'Melody Maker' ran an article declaring it a "major mystery" and asking "what ever happened to Tommy Sampson and his Orchestra?", recalling that "two years ago it was being hailed as something really new in big-band swing", but "had now disappeared". The truth was that Tommy had disbanded, the result of booking difficulties, financial problems and a too rigid musical policy. He admitted himself that he had reached the top too quickly and made many mistakes - his rigid Kenton style was too extreme for British ballrooms.

Not one to give up though, a couple of months later a new 18 piece Sampson Band was on the road (including 10 original members) and made its debut appearance at Hammersmith Palais on Monday 7th March. Adopting a more commercial sound, Tommy said he intended to rehabilitate himself in the minds of bookers and the dancing public. One step in that direction was the addition of glamorous ex-Vic Lewis singer Lynda Russell, alongside Terry Walsh.

The new band made their first broadcast on Tuesday 26th April 1949 and after going on tour returned to Hammersmith Palais at the end of July as holiday relief for the Lou Preager band. By then Lynda Russell had left (I think she got married), her place taken by Gloria Duval.

But once again Tommy learnt the hard way that big-bands didn't pay and this new outfit also broke up. There followed a period during which he worked in music publishing, sand with the George Mitchell Choir and was a member of the Sapphires vocal group, but eventually he more or less gave it all up to become a bandsman with the Salvation Army.

Tommy continued to work ballrooms around the country, but later confined himself to his

homeland of Scotland, where he was still occasionally leading an Edinburgh based big band in the nineties. His last public appearance was early 2008, conducting a big band at Edinburgh Queen's Hall at a concert to celebrate his 90th birthday. He died 20th October that year. Tommy's early much acclaimed big band made a few broadcasts but no commercial recordings. His later bands only made a few recordings, with his Melodisc offering of 1957 suggesting a diversion into rock and roll.

Tommy Sampson Recordings
PYE NIXA

N 15061 Jly 56 (with *Gale Warning*) Heartbreak Hotel /

Met rock
CONQUEST

CP 110 Apl 57 'I need your love / Take me'

MELODISC (Tommy Sampson and his
Strongmen)

1411 57 'Rock 'n' roll those big brown eyes / Rockin''

PARLOPHONE

R 4458 May 58 (with chorus) 'Lazy train / Smooth mood'

Shirley SANDS

A Londoner born in 1937, her family home was bombed during the war and Shirley was evacuated to Bridgewater, a small Somerset town. At the age of twelve she appeared as a pantomime babe with Ted Ray at Bristol Hippodrome.

When Shirley, slim, blonde and very attractive, left school she joined the Kiltie Juniors, where she learned to play the bagpipes, and travelled with them extensively at home and abroad. Outgrowing her junior image she had to eventually leave and began working as a packer in a Littlewoods' warehouse.

Determined to return to show-business, she took singing lessons and did club work whenever possible in the evenings. The lessons certainly paid off and Shirley, who developed a fine dynamic voice with remarkable range, in 1957 joined the chorus, eventually becoming understudy to the star Julie Wilson in the show 'Bells are Ringing' at London Coliseum.

Spotted by Cyril Stapleton, she made several appearances on his Show Band Show including the 1959 summer season at Scarborough Futurist Theatre. Her television debut came on Monday 16th March 1959 on Cyril's ITV series 'The Melody Dances'. The very next day was her 22nd birthday. A week later on Tuesday 23rd she had a solo spot on 'Midday Music Hall'. Shirley continued to fulfil her ambition, appearing on television and in variety shows, cabaret and revue including a two month season at London's Windmill Theatre from May 1960.

Ideally suited to the musical-comedy stage in 1963 she was chosen for one of the lead roles in 'Carnival' a show that unfortunately turned out to be something of a flop, doing nothing for Shirley's

career that seems to have fizzled out at this point - a pity really, she had talent and certainly looked good.

Reader Godfrey King tells me he remembers Shirley as a youngster, attending Marjorie Tattersall's dancing classes in Taunton with his sister.

Shirley Sands Recordings

DECCA

F 11134 May 59 'I surrender / I'm yours'

H.M.V.

POP 1131 63 'It was always you / If you should leave me'

Sylvia SANDS

Not to be confused with Shirley who was blonde, dark haired Sylvia made her name about the same time, scoring a big success on BBC TV's pop-music show 'Drumbeat'. Sylvia was just seventeen when she made her first appearance on the show on Saturday 4th April 1959. A big hit with viewers, she was signed for the rest of the series.

Sylvia's introduction to singing had been with the school choir in her home town of Manchester. Keen to make it a career, she came to London for professional tuition and was heard by Jack Howarth who had previously directed The Kordites vocal group. He arranged an audition at the BBC and tall shapely Sylvia was on her way.

Of Israeli extraction, Sylvia was also a keen athlete and had once been considered for that country's Olympic team.

Later in 1959 she joined the Ken Mackintosh Orchestra on their BBC television series 'Flying Standards' and during 1960 appeared on several 'Bandstand' shows for Granada TV with Ted Heath and his Music.

Sylvia Sands Recordings

COLUMBIA

DB 4321 Jly 59 'Love me now, love me now / More, more, more

romancing'
DB 4579 Feb 61 'Steppin' out with my baby / Autumn tears'

DB 4774 62 'It won't be the same without you / You don't have

a heart'
MAJOR MINOR

MM 680 70 'When I was a child / God how much I love you'

SANTIAGO

Originally a singer with Edmundo Ros, he formed his own Latin American band in 1945, taking over from Ramon Lopez at the Milroy Club. Santiago and his Music continued to work mainly West End clubs and in 1948 featured in the 'Starlight Roof' revue at the London Hippodrome. They made a number of recordings on the Oriole and Harmony labels.

Recordings by Santiago and his Latin Music

HARMONY

A 1010 50 'Wedding samba / Adios mi chaparita'
 A 1011 50 'The Armadillo / Baggles in Mexico'

ORIOLE

CB 1048 Jly 51 'Esclavo triste / Elube chango'
 CB 1049 Jly 51 'Rumba de Media Noche /
 You belong to
 my heart'
 CB 1050 Jly 51 'Choo choo samba / Pernambuco'
 CB 1051 Jly 51 'Carmen / Mi botecito'
 CB 1058 Feb 52 'Que va (I do) / El viandero'

The Sapphires

A vocal group formed in December 1953, they appeared with Jack Parnell and his Band on the ill-fated touring revue 'Jazz Wagon'. Members were Lynda Russell, Beryl Brewster (better known as Beryl Stott), Tommy Sampson, Johnny Walker and Jimmy Watson. Trumpet playing Watson married Lynda Russell in July 1955.

During 1954 Sampson left to become a bandsman with the Salvation Army, replaced by Austin Fletcher and Sylvia Morraine took Beryl Brewster's place. In the 1954 Melody Maker readers poll The Sapphires were voted second to The Stargazers as favourite vocal group.

The group appear to have had a short life, lasting only a year or so. They recorded with Jack Parnell's Band and had one solo disc.

The Sapphires Recordings

PARLOPHONE

R 3802 Jan 54 (*with Jack Parnell Band*) 'The creep /

Route 66'

R 3903 Jun 54 'Until sunrise / Teenager'

Edna SAVAGE

Edna, with the warm husky voice, no doubt lost out somewhat to the similar sounding Irish lass Ruby Murray, who beat her to the recording studio. Born at Warrington in Lancashire on 21st April 1936, one of three daughter's of a landscape gardener, Edna's vocal talent almost certainly came from her mother who was a keen amateur singer.

After leaving school Edna went to work as a G.P.O. telephonist, but she already had an ambition to become a singer. One evening when visiting a local dance with friends, the regular vocalist was off ill and Edna plucked up the courage to ask if she could take her place. She was allowed to sing two songs and did so well that bandleader Eric Popperwell asked her to stay after the dance and discuss a regular booking. In fact she stayed so late her mother reported her missing to the police.

So still not yet sixteen, Edna became a semi-pro singer. Now seeing her ambition becoming a possibility she wrote to the BBC for an audition and was turned down twice, but she persevered and, third time lucky, was invited down to London for a test. A long wait followed until eventually she was given a broadcast on a Northern Region programme 'Easy to Remember'. This was in September 1954 and she sang 'Embraceable You' backed by Alyn Ainsworth and the BBC Northern Variety Orchestra. Soon Edna was broadcasting

regularly from Manchester.

Monday 18th April 1955 was the day she made her television debut in producer Ernest Maxim's 'Show-case', a shop window for new acts introduced by a relative newcomer himself, singer-comedian Dave King. Edna then became a regular on the fortnightly 'Puzzle Corner' and Frankie Howerd's series 'The Howerd Crowd' that also featured the singing Tanner Sisters. From May she joined Ray Martin's Orchestra on the late night Light Programme series 'In the Still of the Night'. She was one of the artists on 'Christmas Box', BBC TV's 1955 Christmas Day variety show. Parlophone Records had noticed Edna and her first disc 'Evermore' was out in May 1955. Also recorded by Ruby Murray (her 7th disc) it was Ruby who took the song into the charts. Edna's next attempt was 'Stars shine in your eyes' in July, but it was Ronnie Hilton who had the hit with this one. It wasn't until her fourth disc, 'Arrivederci darling' in November, that Edna her first and as it turned out only chart entry, spending just one week at No.19 in January 1956. With all her radio and record exposure a variety tour was inevitable. It began on home ground on Monday 13th June 1955 at Warrington's Royal Court Theatre and continued on a forty week circuit all around the country. She played Sunday concerts with the likes of Jimmy Young, Al Martino and the bands of Ken Mackintosh, Jack Parnell and The Kirchins. And by the summer of 1956 Edna had more than gained her spurs and was joint top of the bill for the season in 'Summer Show Boat' at Blackpool's Palace Theatre, with northern comedian Albert Modley and Mike & Bernie Winters.

Still doing Sunday concerts during the show's run, it's amazing the amount of travelling this required. Like the weekend of Sunday 2nd September, Edna had two concerts that day, both on the Isle of Wight, at the Sandown Pavilion and Shanklin Pier. The journey of over five hundred miles, with no motorways, had to be made between last house at Blackpool on Saturday and Monday's matinee.

Edna's recordings during 1956 included popular hits like 'A tear fell' and 'My prayer' and her January 1957 recording 'Never leave me' was a lovely plaintive ballad from Gordon Jenkins 'Manhattan Tower Suite'.

October 1956 saw the start of her own BBC TV series 'Presenting Edna Savage', a series of 15 minute programmes on Friday evenings in which Edna not only sang but danced as well. In November she made her first London top of the bill appearance at the Brixton Empress theatre, and in November took her first trip abroad to appear with Michael Holliday and Ronnie Ronalde on a Dutch television show. Edna's first appearance in pantomime came in December 1956, playing the title role in 'Cinderella' with Lorae Desmond her Prince Charming and Davy Kaye as Buttons, for two weeks each at both the Gloucester Regal and York Rialto.

On Tuesday 29th January 1957 Edna was on BBC TV's Festival of British Popular Song, her second appearance on this annual event, with Ronnie Hilton, Alma Cogan, Lorae Desmond, the Frank Weir Quintet and Stanley Black's Orchestra. The following Monday she appeared on BBC TV's 'Off the Record', and a month later 'The Eamonn

Andrews Show'

During February, while on a tour of service camps in Cyprus, the truck she was travelling in came under fire. Luckily no one was injured. Back in Britain, another spot on the 'Eamonn Andrews Show' with Spike Milligan and Warren Mitchell on Saturday 23rd March, then on Monday she was off on another variety tour.

From Monday 22nd April (the day after her 21st birthday) she was back for a week in her home town of Warrington and was invited to tea with the mayor. But alas what was probably one of her most exciting weeks ended rather painfully, when on Friday she fell down some steps injuring her back requiring a few days in hospital and several weeks' convalescence.

By late May she was back on the road, plus a broadcast 'On Tour' with the Northern Dance Orchestra beginning at Sheffield Town Hall on the 30th. Having no fixed summer season that year, she instead played variety weeks at a number of seaside resorts. Other radio and TV included comedian Fred Emney's 'Variety Incorporated' television show on 4th July and an airing on 'Blackpool Night' on the 31st. During August, on Bank Holiday Monday, Edna was on BBC TV's 'Dream Holiday' with Dennis Lotis and on radio's 'Workers Playtime' on the 13th and Henry Hall's TV show with Patti Lewis on Tuesday the 27th October 1957 brought Edna's first appearances on ITV, 'Top of the Bill' on the 55th and the 'Jack Jackson Show' on the 25th.

Following her earlier airings with Michael Holliday, the BBC paired them in a 15 minute late night radio series 'Sentimental Journey', which was also the title of an E.P. issued by E.M.I. in 1958. Re-issue of this E.P. on compact disc gives all of us, who missed it the first time round, a chance to hear what a happy sound they made together. Come Christmas and Edna was 'Cinderella' with Lorraine Desmond again for three weeks at Stockton's Globe Theatre followed by one week at Hull Regal.

During the early months of her career Edna had been reported as having a semi-secret romance with another rising star, Ronnie Carroll. In one magazine article she is quoted as saying "Ronnie was the first boy I ever loved". Early in 1958 a new romance entered her life when she appeared at Peterborough in a "beat music" package that included singer Terry Dene. Only a few weeks later they both hit the headlines following Dene's drunken punch-up after an appearance at Gloucester's Regal Theatre, resulting in several broken windows.

After first denying any romance, by May Edna admitted the possibility and when the package tour arrived at London's Finsbury Park Empire for the week of Monday 23rd June, 22 year old Edna and 19 year old Terry announced their engagement. They married on Tuesday 8th July 1958 at Marylebone Register Office.

From the beginning their relationship was not going to be easy, Terry, basically a nice guy, was highly strung and moody and a double act they launched at the Chiswick Empire in July - they were on 'Six Five Special' together on 9th August - had come apart by September. Edna picked up her solo career and that winter was in the panto 'Babes in the Wood' at Sheffield Empire. She played one of the babes and young singer Laurie

London was the other.

Edna toured in variety during 1959 and was back playing 'Cinderella' in December at Ipswich Gaumont. On radio she had a new Tuesday afternoon series 'With a Smile', with June Marlow, Jackie Rae, pianist Johnnie Pearson and the Jackie Brown Quartet. Her television appearances during 1959 had been few and exclusively commercial.

During the 1960 Radio Show at London's Earl's Court, Edna was resident vocalist, appearing on the 'live' stage for two weeks during August. She began playing the Northern clubs, accompanied by pianist Dennis Plowright. Dennis had been a member of Terry Dene's Dean Aces before Terry and Edna had wed.

Following an up and down private and professional life Edna eventually married Dennis on Valentine's Day 1989 at Warrington. At the time she said she hoped to make a vocal comeback, maybe in a trio with her 17 year old twin daughters Allison and Samantha. Unfortunately very little more was heard of Edna, until reports of her death on 31st December 2000. In my opinion an underrated talent who deserved greater success than she ever achieved.

Edna Savage Recordings

PARLOPHONE

R 4017 May 55 'Evermore / I'll be there'
R 4043 Jly 55 'Stars shine in your eyes / A star is born'
R 4067 Oct 55 'In the wee small hours of the morning /

Candlelight'
R 4097 Nov 55 'Arrivederci darling / Bella notte'
(with Peter

Knight Singers acc by Peter

Knight orch)

R 4139 Feb 56 'Tell me, tell me, tell me that you love me /

Please

hurry home'

R 4159 Apl 56 'A tear fell / Something old, something new'

R 4226 Oct 56 'My prayer / Me 'n' you 'n' the moon'
(acc by

Reg

Owen orch)

R 4253 Jan 57 'Never leave me / Don't ever go' (acc by

Ron

Goodwin orch)

R 4301 Apl 57 'Five oranges, four apples /
My head's in

de barrel'

R 4360 Oct 57 'Let me be loved / Diano Marina'

R 4420 Mar 58 'Once / My shining star' (acc by
Ron

Goodwin orch)

R 4489 Nov 58 'Why, why, why / Near you'

R 4572 Aug 59 'Maybe this year / Beautiful love'

R 4648 Mar 60 'Every day / All I need'

Joan SAVAGE

Married to piano playing Ken Morris, they toured extensively in variety as a comedy and song duo throughout the latter forties, fifties and sixties. Vocalist Joan was still touring in the nineties and I saw her in 1992, starring with Alan Randall in 'Turned Out Nice Again', a factual play about

George Formby.

Joan, from Blackpool, had her first taste of show-biz as a youngster appearing in the Tower Children's Ballet. During the late fifties she was a familiar face on Jack Jackson's ITV shows, and during 1959 Joan and Ken were regulars on the BBC's 13 week TV series 'Hi Summer' with Kenneth Connor and Thelma Ruby. The pair played many summer season shows, often in her home town of Blackpool. Joan made just a handful of recordings for Columbia.

COLUMBIA (acc by Geoff Love orch)

DB 3929 Apl 57 'Five oranges, four apples / Bamboozled'
DB 3968 June 57 'Love letters in the sand / With all my heart'
DB 4039 Nov 57 'Lula rock-a-hula / Shake me I rattle'
DB 4159 Mar 58 'Left right out of my heart / Hello happiness,
goodbye blues' (with Rita Williams Singers)

AI SAXON

A late fifties vocalist, with several recordings on the Fontana label, Al began in show-business as a musician. Born Alan Fowler deep in the Welsh hills in 1932, come the outbreak of the war he was living in London. Evacuated to Cornwall he began learning piano and later, back in London, went to work for a music publisher.

During National Service with the R.A.F. Alan saw service in the station band where he extended his musical knowledge, adding trumpet, banjo, bass, drums, trombone, vibes and accordion to his talents. He was also a bit of a boxer and a judo fanatic.

After demob he got a job as trumpet player in a club band and this led to session work for recording studios. On one such occasion he met Australian singer Lorraine Desmond and became her piano accompanist on several variety tours. He also wrote some of the songs she sang.

Aware that Al could also sing without frightening the animals, Lorraine encouraged him in this direction and he eventually became a member of a vocal group. Ken Jones, musical director at Fontana Records took notice and in 1957 with his new name Al Saxon made his first recording for the label. Al's first offering 'Dream boy' met with a cool reception from the record buying public, but his third 'You're the top cha cha' caught the imagination and went to No. 17 on the charts.

Al appeared on television in shows like 'Six Five Special', 'Cool for Cats' and 'Dig This' and was a regular on radio's 'Saturday Club'. He had a spell as DJ on Fontana's Wednesday evening Radio Luxembourg show. Arriving on the scene a bit late for variety, Al toured mainly on one-night-stands and played cabaret clubs at home and on the Continent.

A point of interest - a singer by the name of Al Saxon was a member of The Moderniques, a British vocal group which made several recordings for Parlophone. But as this was in the early thirties it must have been a different guy.

Al Saxon Recordings

FONTANA

H 111 Feb 58 'Dream boy / You, all you'
H 138 Jun 58 'Where the black-eyed Susans grow / She
screamed' (acc by Johnny
Gregory orch)
H 164 Nov 58 'Your the top cha cha / The day the
rains came' (acc by Johnny
Gregory orch)
H 188 Mar 59 'Chattanooga choo-choo /
Chip off the
old block'
H 205 Jly 59 'Only sixteen / I'm all right, Jack'
H 221 Oct 59 (with The Lana Sisters)
'Seven little girls sitting in
the back seat'
H 222 Oct 59 'Heart of stone / Linda Lu
(acc & boogie piano by
Ken Jones)
H 231 Nov 59 'Marina / Me without you'
H 244 Mar 60 'The piper of love / Believe me'
H 261 Aug 60 'I've heard that song before /
Someone like you'
H 278 Nov 60 'Blue-eyed boy / Don't push your luck'

PICCADILLY

7N35002 May 61 'Can you keep a secret /
Promises' (both his own
compositions)
7N35011 Aug 61 (Al Saxon & his orch) 'You came a
long way from St. Louis / There I've said it
again' (re-issued
Feb. 1964)
7N35021 Nov 61 (Al Saxon & his orch) 'Don't get
around much anymore /
Saturday night'
7N35036 Mar 62 'Evil eye / What more can I say'

PARLOPHONE

R 4966 Dec 62 'I got a girl / But I do'
R 5016 Feb 63 'The man who broke the bank at Monte
Carlo /
If you want to go to
Dreamland'
MERCURY
MF 801 64 'Who was that girl / All night long'
MF 811 64 'Hot and bothered / Another you'

POLYDOR

BM 56068 66 'Why did I lose you baby /
Tomorrows world'

PRESIDENT

PT 183 Mar 68 'Against the wall / East side 628'

Joe SAYE

Born Joseph Schumann in Glasgow on 25th February 1923, he was blind like his friend George Shearing and began like him playing accordion, then moving on to piano. Joe's first professional engagement came in 1937, when aged 14 and still playing accordion he was signed by Roy Fox as a soloist on his band's stage shows. Joe continued to tour in variety, including troop shows for ENSA, until 1946 when he formed

a quartet for the Embassy Club in Belfast, leading on piano.

Described as a "bright modern band", in July 1947 they returned to the mainland and a summer season at the Empress Ballroom, Folkestone. In 1948 Joe was leading his group at the Palm Court Restaurant, next door to the Pavilion Theatre in Penzance. He even appeared in an Emlyn Williams production at the Pavilion.

About this time he reduced to a trio, featuring himself on accordion and piano with bass and electric guitar, a line up he seemed to stick with over the following decade. Joe had previously been pianist to singer Kitty Masters and the new Trio often accompanied her in variety.

On 17th December 1949 Joe married Miss Joan Warner at Hampstead Register Office, followed by a short honeymoon in Paris. Very short in fact, for, following a successful summer season at the Ormscliffe Hotel, Llandudno, North Wales, the trio, comprising Joe on piano and accordion, Johnny Hawksworth bass and Ken Wade guitar, were booked for Christmas and New Year at the newly refurbished Odeon Ballroom at Prestwich, Manchester. Unfortunately that rich French food must have up-set him, because on Boxing Day he collapsed and Odeon organist Charles Smitten took over on piano.

Over the years there were a number of personnel changes including Tommy Woods, Bob Todd, Peter Ind and Laurence Anthony all taking their turn on bass with Johnny Wiltshire and probably others on guitar. As well as playing their instruments all members joined in with a vocal chorus.

The trio began appearing on radio, initially on specialist shows like 'Jazz Club', 'Accordion Interlude' and 'Jazz for Moderns', they later aired on 'Midday Music Hall' and the like.

The early fifties found the trio mainly based in London, playing clubs like the Starlight Room, Washington Hotel, the Royal Court Theatre Club and Adelaide Hall's Calypso Club. In January 1953 Joe became M.D at Ciro's Club, staying for well over a year and for a time augmented to a sextet.

Joe and his trio began recording for Melodisc in 1951 and also made a few sides for Decca and Columbia. Joe had reportedly recorded for Decca early in 1952 using an unusual backing of six violins and a vocal choir, but there doesn't seem to be any issue and it wasn't until June 1953 that he appeared on the label with one of his own compositions 'Bird calls'. Despite having bird sounds in the background (credited to Percy Edwards on the label) it is a more stylish piece than the title suggests. The side was later issued on E.P. and he also did an LP for Decca with strings (LF 1156) in November 1953. During the next couple of years he is reported as making albums for both Columbia and Parlophone, but I don't have details.

In 1955 Joe, with his wife and young son, decided to hop over the pond and try his luck in America. It was here that he became a great friend of George Shearing who helped him find work. During the late fifties he recorded for the American EmArcy label. Joe played in many US clubs and accompanied a number of stars including Dakota Staton and Peggy Lee. He later moved north working around Canada and settled

in Toronto, where he died in December 1995 aged 72.

Joe Saye Recordings

MELODISC (*Joe Saye Trio*)

1166	Apl	51	'Pink champagne / Three of a kind'
1174	Jly	51	'Harlem nocturne / Forte'
1219	Jly	52	'There's a small hotel / Unison we'
1263	Jan	54	(<i>piano solo</i>) 'These foolish things / Love

walked in'
DECCA (*Joe Saye Music*)

F 10112 Jun 53 'Bird calls / Skylark'

COLUMBIA (*Joe Saye Sextet*)

SCMC 7 Dec 54 'Have you met Miss Jones? / Cynthia's in love'

(45rpm only - available on special order)

Primo SCALA

Think of accordion bands and you immediately think of Primo Scala, and it's not surprising considering the number of records he made. But of course Primo Scala didn't really exist, he was just the figment of some recording company A & R man's imagination. And that man is usually credited as being Harry Bidgood (although they probably didn't call them A & R men then).

Harry, a Londoner, was born in 1898. A pianist, he played with de Groot's orchestra and began recording in 1925. By the early thirties he was selling thousands of records on Woolworth's Eclipse label as Don Porto and his Novelty Accordions. Later, on the Crown label, he was known as Rossini's Accordions while at the same time he was Primo Scala on Rex, later transferring to Decca. These weren't Bidgood's only aliases, he had several more, often recording the same song (usually with a different singer) under different names for different labels, and the record buying public never suspected.

It is also almost certain that all the sides attributed to Primo Scala were not Harry Bidgood. In fact, as he died in November 1957 and Primo Scala recordings were still being made in the sixties, it would seem rather impossible. Billy Reid claimed he was the first Primo Scala and George Scott-Wood also had a go.

During the late forties and fifties many Primo Scala recordings had vocals by The Keynotes and several of these made the hit parade. Not the UK hit parade but the American one! Released over there on the London label 'Underneath the arches' went as high as No.6 in September 1948. The seasonal coupling of 'Jingle bells' and 'The mistletoe kiss' charted the following Christmas and their version of 'Cruising down the river' was another hit during 1949.

Primo Scala accordion recordings covered many of the hit songs of the day from the thirties, through the war years (where they appeared on Decca's MW (Music While You Work) series and on into the sixties. I have listed them from 1946.

Primo Scala Accordion Band Recordings
DECCA

F 8612	Apl 46	'Cruising down the river (<i>v. Kenny Noble</i>) /
Cyril Shane'		Two can dream as cheaply as one (<i>v.</i>
F 8639	Jly 46	'I'd like to get you alone / Promises'
F 8651	Aug 46	Six Hits Medley (two parts)'
F 8686	Oct 46	'The mission of the rose / On
Sunshine Bay		(<i>both v. Pat</i>
O'Regan')		
F 8727	Feb 47	'The old lamplighter (<i>v. Billie Campbell</i>) /
(v. P O'R)		Give me the moon over London
F 8739	Feb 47	'We talk about you every night (<i>v. BC</i>) / San Remo
(v. PO'R)		
F 8759	Apl 47	'Go home / Dream again (<i>both v. Edna Kaye</i>)'
F 8783	Jun 47	'The Punch and Judy man / Oh! oh!
Maria		(<i>both v.</i>
Edna Kaye')		
F 8791	Sep 47	'In the heart of Montmartre / A shanty in Ypailanti (<i>both v. Pat</i>
O'Regan')		
F 8828	Jan 48	'My love is only for you / Sentimental gaucho (<i>both v.</i>
Kenny Noble')		
F 8843	Feb 48	'Bel Ami (<i>v. Kenny Noble</i>) / Down at the
friendly tavern'		
F 8872	Apl 48	(<i>with Sam Browne & The Keynotes</i>)
'Heartbreaker'		
F 8888	Jun 48	'Toolie oolie doolie' (<i>Johnny Denis on reverse</i>)
		(Next thirteen discs with The Keynotes)
F 8925	Jly 48	'Hometown / Side by side'
F 8954	Aug 48	'Underneath the arches / I want some money'
F 8983	Oct 48	'Jingle bells / The mistletoe kiss'
F 9011	Nov 48	'Ain't it grand to be bloomin' well dead /
Wheezy Anna'		
F 9047	Dec 48	'Then I'll be happy / That certain party'
F 9052	Dec 48	'Show me the way to go home / Dreaming'
F 9073	Jan 49	'Powder your face with sunshine / Moor beer'
F 9089	Feb 49	'Swinin' down the lane / There's nothing left in
Sleepyville'		
F 9133	May 49	I've got a lovely bunch of coconuts / The echo
told me a lie'		
F 9139	May 49	'In a shady nook by a babbling brook / The
windmill song'		
F 9152	Jun 49	'The village band / Jolly brothers'
F 9204	Aug 49	'There's a lovely lake in London / Who were you with
last night'		
F 9270	Nov 49	'Snowy white snow and jingle bells / If you knock on any door on
Christmas Day'		
F 9307	Dec 49	'Medley No.1 : Harry Lime theme / Confidentially / The echo told me a
lie /		You're breaking my heart /
Leicester Sq. rag /		The wedding samba' (<i>with vocals by</i>
Alan Kane)		
F 9341	Feb 50	(<i>with The Keynotes</i>) 'Out of a clear blue sky /
Bright eyes'		
F 9357	Mar 50	'Medley No.2 : Hop Scotch polka / I'll string
say about		along with you / Is it true what they
in your eyes		Dixie / The Scottish samba / The kiss / Dear hearts and gentle people'
(v. Alan Kane)		
F 9362	Mar 50	(<i>with The Keynotes</i>) 'Why should the rich man have it all / I love the
gravediggers daughter'		
F 9404	May 50	'Medley No.3 : Music! music! music! / Jealous heart / The French can-can polka /
Down in		the glen / My thanks to you / I'd've
baked a		cake' (<i>v.</i>
Cyril Shane)		
F 9437	Jun 50	'Medley No.4 : Chattanooga shoe shine boy / My foolish heart / Enjoy yourself /
C'est si bon		/ Cherry stones / Chug-a-lug' (<i>v.</i>
Cyril Shane)		
F 9453	Jly 50	(<i>with The Keynotes</i>) 'Hey neighbour / The hayride polka'
F 9473	Aug 50	'Medley No.5 : Two on a tandem / Dearie / The
girl /		old piano roll blues / Daddy's little
floor fell in'		Let's do it again / The night the
		(<i>v.</i>
Alan Kane)		
F 9491	Nov 50	'Primo Scala Medley No.6' (<i>next five discs with The Keynotes</i>)
F 9497	Nov 50	'Clap hands polka / The memory of a waltz'
F 9503	Nov 50	'Rudolph the red nosed reindeer / The village of
Christmas pie'		
F 9543	Nov 50	'Smile, smile, smile / Willow will you
weep for me'		
F 9580	Dec 50	'Medley No.7'
F 9589	Jan 51	'Whisper while you waltz / Love me forever'
F 9603	Feb 51	'Sierra die Credos / Arc de Triomphe overture'
F 9618	Mar 51	Primo Scala Medley No.8'
F 9650	Apl 51	(<i>with The Keynotes</i>) 'The Saturday waltz / Mockin'
Bird Hill'		
F 9693	Jun 51	'I do like to be beside the seaside / A young
man's fancy'		
F 9799	Dec 51	(<i>with The Stargazers</i>) 'A Gordon for me / Gathering of
the Clans'		
F 9807	Dec 51	" " 'Where the sweetheart roses grow / Standing
beneath the clock'		
F 9826	Jan 52	'Six Hit Chorus Medley'
F 9834	Feb 52	(<i>with The Keynotes</i>) 'If you smile at the sun / Hoop-diddle-ee-i-
doo-ra-li-ay'		
F 9890	Apl 52	'Six Hits Chorus Medley'
F 9905	May 52	(<i>with The Stargazers</i>) 'Dance me loose / A-round

the corner'
 F 9907 May 52 'You wish me to forget you / The
 echo rag'
 F 9913 Jun 52 'Lingering down the lane /
 Tho' I wasn't born
 in Ireland'
 POLYGON

P 1089 Nov 53 'Swedish rhapsody : Answer me : Rags
 to riches
 / I saw mommy kissing Santa
 Claus :
 When you hear Big Ben : Poppa
 Piccolino'
 P 1100 Feb 54 'Oh my papa : Changing partners : You,
 you,
 you / The velvet glove : If you
 love me :

Golden tango'
 P 1101 Feb 54 'Music box tango / Lazy whistler'
 EMBASSY

WB 171 Feb 56 (with Bob Dale & The Rita Williams
 Singers)
 'Robin Hood /
 Happy trails'
 WB 172 Feb 56 'Bluebell polka / Johnny Ragtime'
 WB 179 Apr 56 'The poor people of Paris /
 Theme from The
 Threepenny Opera'
 HT 106 May 56 'Holiday Time Medley'
 HT 107 May 56 'Holiday Time Medley'
 WB 203 Oct 56 'Autumn concerto / The Proud Ones'
 DECCA

F 12526 Nov 66 (with The Goodtimes) 'Powder your
 face with
 sunshine / I'm looking over a four
 leaf clover'
 F 12791 Jun 68 'Here comes summer / Blue skies'

Marjorie SCOTT

Swansea born Marjorie began her vocal career at the age of 19 after winning a singing contest promoted by BBC Wales producer Miss Mai Jones. Introduced to radio listeners nationally by Henry Hall on one of his 'Guest Night' programmes Marjorie went on to become a firm favourite on Welsh Home Service shows such as 'Welsh Rarebit' and 'When Day Is Done'. She made two discs for Parlophone.

PARLOPHONE

R 3265 Mar 50 'Say goodnight but not goodbye / A
 little bit of
 heaven
 by the sea'
 R 3285 May 50 'When there's love at home / My little
 dream
 boat' (acc by Ron
 Goodwin orch)

Ronnie SCOTT

One of the foremost flag wavers for British jazz over six decades, not just as a player but more so through the club in London that still bears his name. Tenor-sax playing Ronnie Scott first came to prominence as a member of Ted Heath's Orchestra in 1946.

Born in London's Commercial Road on 28th

January 1927, despite being the son of saxophonist and bandleader Jock Scott, Ronnie showed little interest in music until he was 15 when he bought a saxophone and took lessons from Jack Lewis (father of Harry Lewis who married Vera Lynn). At the time he was working as a record packer at the Keith Prowse music shop.

Ronnie first began playing odd dates in local gigs but by 1945 had turned professional and done a brief spell in Cab Kaye's Band at the Orchard Club before spending almost a year with Johnny Claes and his Clae Pigeons. He moved in and out of several other outfits then joined Ted Heath in February 1946, where he also featured as a member of Jack Parnell's Quartet.

A year later Ronnie was taking in the jazz scene in New York, paying his way by working in the band aboard the liner 'Queen Mary'. Back home he went on to play in groups led by Tony Crombie and Tito Burns and during 1948 was a member of the Ambrose Orchestra at The Nightingale Club. During the winter of 1949 he took a cruise out to the Bahamas on the SS Coronica, playing in his father Jock Scott's band. Come the summer of 1950 and Ronnie was a member of Jack Nathan's Band at the Coconut Grove, staying until December when he left to join Vic Lewis' Orchestra. Once again this only lasted a few months and by the spring he had moved on to the Jack Parnell Orchestra. Ronnie was voted top tenor-sax player in the 'Melody Maker' 1951 readers' poll, an award that was repeated year after year.

While hopping from job to job Ronnie had been much into the late forties be-bop craze prominent among young jazz players at the time and fronted his own Bop-tet group, recording several sides for Esquire. This group, with a varying line up, appeared regularly at Club 11 concerts.

In October 1952 Ronnie left Jack Parnell to form his own big band which he took out on tour in 1953. Members included Benny Green and Tony Crombie and original vocalists were Art Baxter and Barbara Jay. The band made its London stage debut on a Sunday concert at the Edmonton Regal with the Jack Parnell Musicmakers on 12th April 1953 and its radio debut in December. While being critically acclaimed and supported by jazz enthusiasts (Maurice Burman, one of Melody Maker's most critical critics, said it was "most exciting, invigorating, original and brilliant - there's no band in the country to touch it") its jazz only policy wasn't commercially a success and by the end of 1954 it was coming apart. Several players left to join the new "no expense spared" Malcolm Mitchell Orchestra. But at least the rewards had allowed Ronnie to indulge his love of fast cars and he was currently running a Jaguar XK120.

Not one to give up easily, by early September 1955 there were adverts in the music press for the New Ronnie Scott Orchestra and it played its first venue, Norwich's Samson & Hercules Ballroom, on 15th September.

Ronnie had remained in contact at all times with the smaller jazz clubs, reverting to a quartet or quintet as required and he continued to bounce between big band and small group as the mood, or booking, demanded. Melody Maker voted his the Top Small Group throughout the early fifties.

In 1957 he took a small band on an exchange tour of the States (Eddie Condon's Band came over here), although they missed the first couple of dates due to a dock strike in New York. During 1958 Ronnie had a spell in Tito Burns' band on the ITV show 'Oh Boy', alongside Tubby Hayes and Harry Klein. He later joined Tubby Hayes in fronting The Jazz Couriers. By 1960 Ronnie had opened his own jazz club in London's Soho district with partner Pete King. This was to become a magnet for jazz performers and fans alike, and four decades later The Ronnie Scott Club in Frith Street is still at the hub of jazz in Britain. It was only through the efforts of Ronnie and his partner that many top American musicians and singers played live in this country, and despite often shaky finances the pair always continued to popularise the best in jazz. Sadly Ronnie is no longer there to introduce the acts or perform, a very disillusioned man in his private life he suffered bouts of depression and on 23rd December 1996 was found dead at his flat by his daughter Rebecca.

Ronnie Scott Recordings

ESQUIRE

10-036 49 (RS Boptet) 'Wee dot / Coquette'
 10-038 Nov 49 (RS Boptet) 'Scrapple from the apple
 (two parts)'
 12-011 Jan 51 (RS Boptet) 'Don't blame me'
 (J Dankworth
 on reverse)
 10-125 Apl 51 (RS Quartet) 'September song /
 Flamingo'
 10-131 May 51 (RS Quartet) 'Have you met Miss Jones
 /
 Too marvellous
 for words'
 10-141 Jun 51 (RS Boptet) 'Chasin' the bird /
 Little
 Willie leaps'
 10-154 Aug 51 (RS Boptet) 'Crazy rhythm / El sino'
 10-185 Dec 51 (with Ronnie Ball Trio) 'Close your eyes
 /
 I didn't know what
 time it was'
 10-195 Mar 52 (with Kenny Graham ten-sax and
 rhythm)
 'Battle Royal /
 Twin beds'
 10-197 Mar 52 (with Ronnie Ball Trio) 'All of me /
 The
 nearness of you'
 10-211 May 52 (with Kenny Graham ten-sax and
 rhythm)
 'Not so
 fast / Fast'
 10-255 Nov 52 (RS Quartet) 'Love me or leave me /
 (Quintet) Scott's
 expedition'
 10-265 Nov 52 (RS Quartet) 'Smoke gets in your
 eyes /
 Avalon'
 10-275 Feb 53 (RS Quintet) 'Seven eleven / Nemo'
 10-279 Apl 53 (RS Sextet) 'Troubled air / Eureka'
 05-088 May 53 (RS Orch) 'Indian summer / Have you
 heard
 (v.
 Johnnie Grant)
 10-291 May 53 (RS Orch) 'Compos mentis /
 Lover come
 back to me'
 10-311 Aug 53 (RS Quartet) 'I cover the waterfront /
 Tangerine'

10-321 Oct 53 (RS Orch) 'Stompin' at the Savoy /
 Body beautiful'
 10-331 Nov 53 (RS Orch) 'Double or nothing / Hard
 feelings'
 10-335 Dec 53 (RS Quartet) 'How am I to know /
 Night and day'
 10-371 Jun 54 (RS Quartet) 'Sunshine on a dull day /
 Poor
 butterfly'
 10-391 Aug 54 (RS Orch) 'Perdido / Cherokee'
 10-431 Jan 55 (RS Orch) 'Evening in Paris /
 After
 you've gone'
 10-432 Jan 55 (RS Orch) 'But not for me (v. Stevie
 Wise) /
 Serenity'
 10-435 Feb 55 (RS Quintet) 'Falling in love with love /
 I
 remember you'
 10-441 May 55 (RS Quintet) 'Short circuit / Fidelius'
 10-451 Jly 55 (RS Orch) 'Time after time /
 Quicksilver'
 10-461 Nov 55 (RS Orch) 'This heart of mine / S'il
 vous plait'
 10-465 Nov 55 (RS Quintet) 'I'll never smile again /
 Samson'
 10-466 Nov 55 (RS Orch) 'With every breath I take /
 Bang'

TEMPO

A 153 Jan 57 (RS Quintet) 'I'll take romance / Speak
 low'